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No. 29 SEPTEMBER 1987
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ZZAP! 64

MONTHLY REVIEW FOR COMMODORE SOFTWARE



THE MAG THAT SHOWS A CLEAN SET OF WHEELS!

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THE RETURN OF GREMLIN'S SPHERICAL HERO
RE-BOUNDER

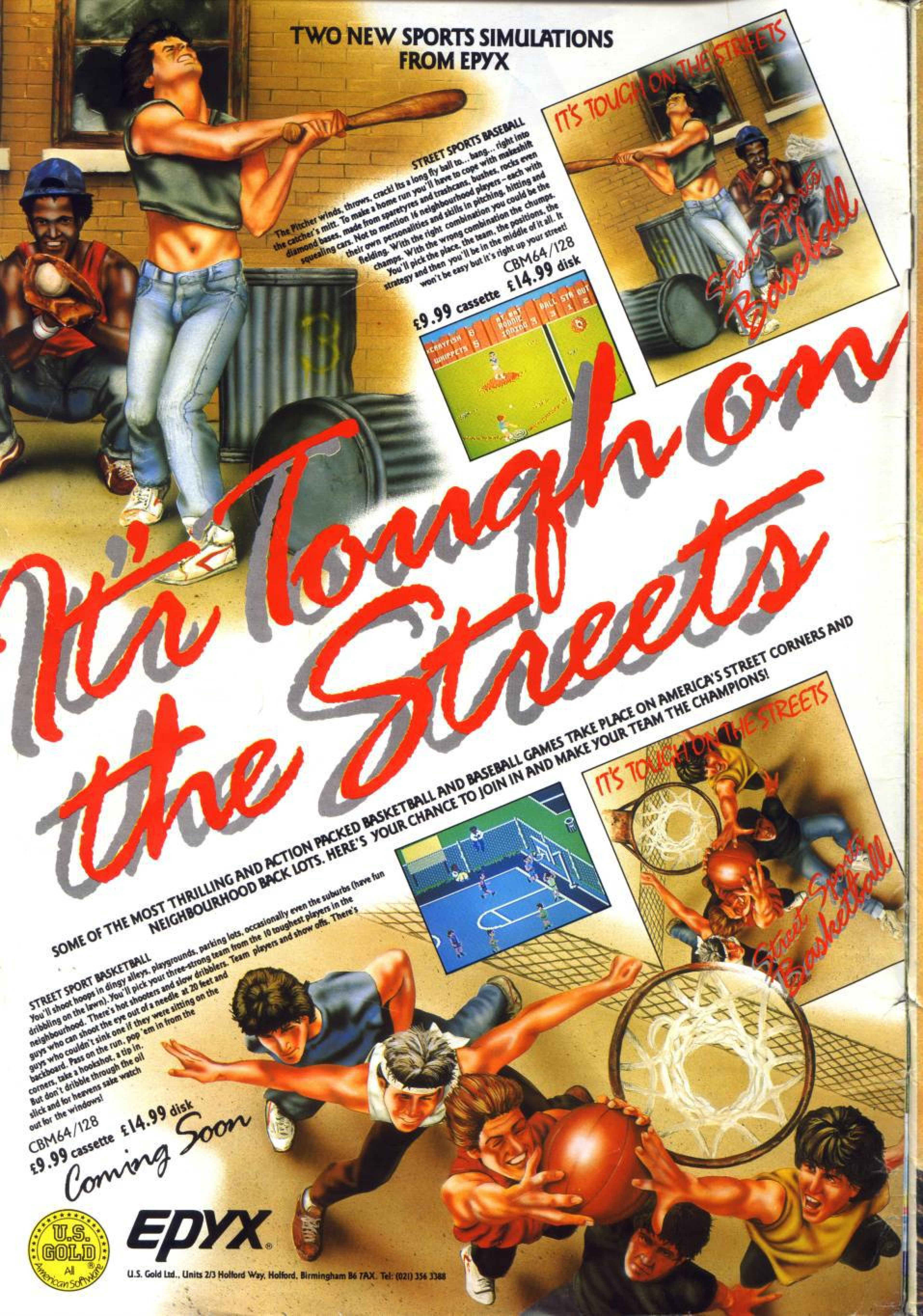
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ZYNAPS

ROAD RUNNER BURNS IN

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FASHIONABLE FEATURES

STARS FOR SEPTEMBER

CRUCIAL COMPETITIONS



By the way, the next ZZAP!'s on sale on September 10th – be there or be a triangle.

We'll

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FROM THE AUTHOR OF *SHOGUN*, JAMES CLAVELL, COMES *TAI-PAN* AND A TERRIFIC NEW GAME PACKED WITH ACTION AND STUNNING GRAPHICS. *TAI-PAN* IS THE EXCITING STORY OF A MAN AND AN ISLAND. BECOME DIRK STRUAN – A PIRATE, A SMUGGLER, A MANIPULATOR OF MEN ACHIEVING RICHES BEYOND IMAGINATION. ENTER A WORLD OF BLOOD, SIN, TREACHERY, CONSPIRACY AND MURDER – A GAME OF GRAND ENTERTAINMENT!



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DROVES, IN SWIRLING GASES, IN FORMS SPINNING A
EADLY GOSSAMAR AND THERE WERE MORE TO COME...
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THE BEST THING TO HAPPEN TO COMPUTER MAGAZINES SINCE CRASH AND ZZAP! 64

WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT . . .

This has been a remarkable month here in ZZAP! towers. After a slightly slow start, the flow of software eventually picked up at such a rate that by the end of the month we were inundated with vast quantities of quality software. When was the last time we had a Gold Medal and three Sizzlers in a single issue? What makes this activity all the more spectacular is that it has come so close to this year's PCW show – an event which usually causes a severe software drought.

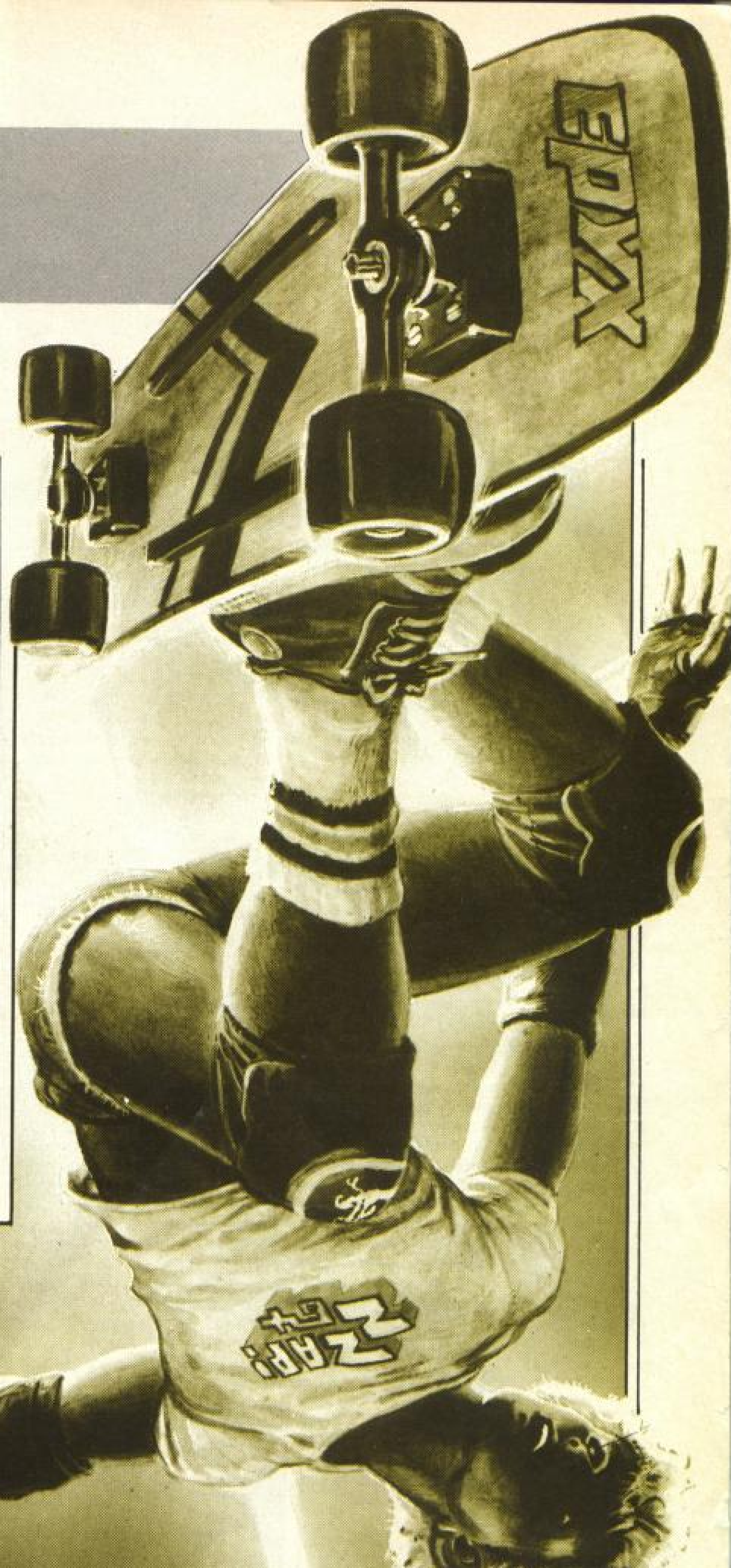
Speaking of the PCW show, this year's tenth anniversary bash promises to be the best yet, with a number of special promotions and new releases promised.

From our point of view, one of the show's major events will be the launch of Newsfield's new magazine **The Games Machine**. This exciting multi-user periodical is being produced by two of the company's most experienced and talented journalists, Graeme Kidd and Gary Penn, and promises to take a fresh and innovative look at the field of electronics entertainment – a must for any computer owner. Tune in next month for more details, or see us at stands 3046 and 3047 (National Hall, Gallery Level) at the Olympia.

This month has also been interesting from my own personal point of view. Apart from the minor inconvenience of my house burning down, I've also become an uncle for the first time (congrats to my sister Deirdre, her husband Vincent and Adrian the sprog!). I'll talk to you again next issue – but after a much quieter month I hope.



Ciarán Brennan



ADVERTISERS INDEX

GAMES REVIEWED

ZZAP! TEST

ZYNAPS

Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick only

●A thrilling audio-visual experience in deepest space

Far out, in the most remote reaches of space, a group of three mutli-role Scorpion fighters set off on a mission to seek out and and destroy a secret alien stronghold. You are their leader.

The action is set over 12 different horizontally scrolling levels, starting inside the narrow and twisting confines of a space station. As soon as the Scorpion sets off, alien craft zoom in to attack. Contact with them or their missiles has fatal consequences, but an on-board double shot laser is used to defend the craft.

When a formation of aliens is shot, a glowing fuel pod is dropped. These are automatically picked up when touched, the fuel enters directly into the ship's weapons system, and an icon is displayed at the bottom of the screen. At first this represents extra Speed, then advances to extra Lasers, Plasma Bombs, Homing Missiles and finally Seeker Missiles. When the desired addition appears, it is added to the Scorpion by keeping the fire button depressed (the fighter glows to show readiness to accept an extra feature) when the next fuel pod is collected. The Scorpion holds a maximum of four extra speed and laser units, and two of any other feature.

When the Space Station's exit port is reached, a large alien mothership appears and blocks the way. Destroying this is the only way to progress to the next level.

After the confines of the Space Station comes a dense asteroid field filled with attacking craft, and after that comes a series of stranger and stranger alien environments until, on level 12, the alien base is reached – where a final deadly confrontation with the Mother alien is staged.

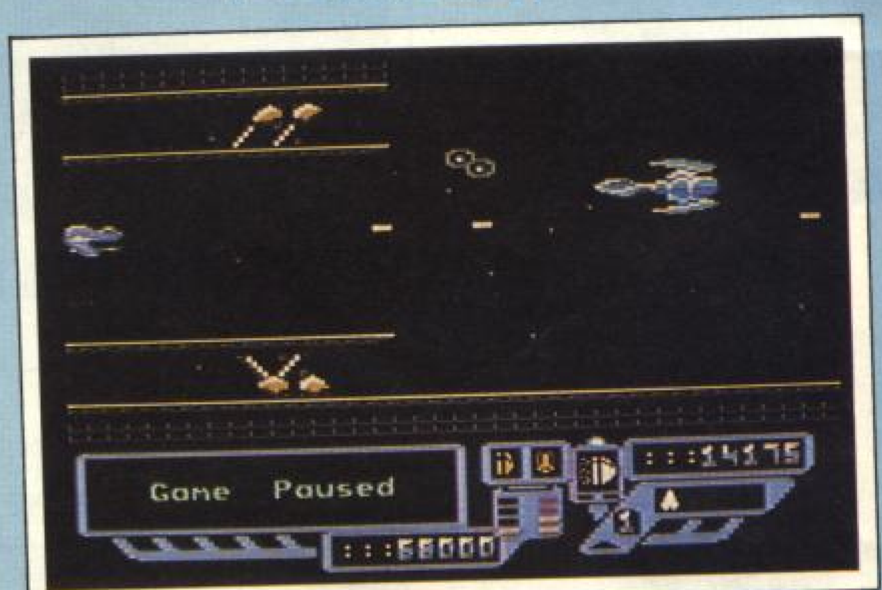
If you think that the horizontally scrolling format is beginning to be played out – play this and think again. *Zynaps* is addictive, plays well and *feels* good. The Scorpion handles beautifully, with just the right amount of inertia, and the alien attack patterns are unusual, with odd swirling and bouncing attacks. The progressive icon system is totally unobtrusive and allows features to be added without interrupting the gameplay at all. In fact, the only thing that lets down the game design is the fact the level restarts whenever the craft is destroyed. It's pretty tough going, and later levels seem almost impossibly hard – but practice pays off. A brilliant atmosphere is generated by the unusual and pretty graphics, and the smart sound effects are suitably fitting. If you're a shoot 'em up fan, don't deny yourself a slice of this action.



► Having just negotiated the asteroid belt, the Scorpion is faced by the threat of alien strike craft – if it ain't one thing it's another!



► The first mothership proves an elusive adversary



► The cartoon-like settings of the Arizona desert set the scene for the madcap activities of the two Warner Bros characters



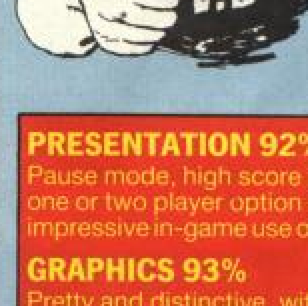


▶ Level three, and the attack of the mutant bubbles is well under way

Up until recently, it was my impression that shoot 'em ups were always a product of the Status Quo school of computer programming – you know what I mean, all exactly the same except for a different guitar solo. But this is very wrong, as Gary Liddon took great pains to point out to me. Most games of this type differ in one respect – feel – and this is where *Zynaps* is a real winner . . . it feels so good. The ship is incredibly controllable – with a beautifully weighted inertial control method – and the alien attack patterns provide exactly the right amount of challenge to give maximum enjoyment without ever becoming too easy. Another important point is the method used to select extra weapons and abilities – it's remarkably simple, yet the fact that your hand never needs to leave the joystick adds greatly to the enjoyment and playability. Buy this – even if you've already got 2,000,000 shoot 'em ups in your collection.



Okay so it's an old formula revamped in a new package – definitely scoring zero on the originality scale. But that doesn't matter, because even ignoring the superlative graphics and the super sound effects *Zynaps* is a great game. Great because of the attention that John Cummings has paid to the almost faultless gameplay, great because of the continuous challenge, all in all just great because it is!!! Head and shoulders above the competition *Zynaps* is a sure-fire winner, bound to be hit with arcadesters both young and old. If you're looking for a little something to while away those balmy summer afternoons, then why not try *Zynaps* as a bit of a refresher.



▶ Only the mothership stands between the Scorpion and level five



PRESENTATION 92%
Pause mode, high score table, one or two player option and impressive in-game use of icons.

GRAPHICS 93%
Pretty and distinctive, with increasingly impressive backdrops.

SOUND 87%
Pleasant title music and wonderfully atmospheric spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 84%
Initially difficult, but remaining addictive despite the frustration.

LASTABILITY 89%
Twelve tricky levels of death dealing mayhem should provide more than a fair challenge.

OVERALL 90%
An immensely addictive, slick and infuriatingly difficult shoot 'em up.

'WHO WANTS TO BE INFURIATED!'

ROAD RUNNER

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

Meep! Meep! Here comes the World's fastest feathered freak, that supersonic Road Runner in his very own arcade game. And, true to the cartoon series, in paw-blistering pursuit is the sharp-nosed Wile E Coyote, intent on having roast Road Runner for dinner.

The player takes control of Road Runner, who has to escape the slavering attentions of the horrible hound. He can outsprint the coyote with ease, but the prairie wolf is a persistent carnivore, and is quite willing to pursue his adversary on paw, pogo stick, skateboard or even jet-powered skateboard.

The action is set over 12 horizontally scrolling levels, with Road Runner speeding along from right to left and completing a level by reaching a set marker. Wile E hotfoots behind, trying every trick in the book to reach his prey. Road Runner starts with five lives, losing one each time that Wile E gets his paws on him.

The disadvantage of all this speed is that energy is expended at a vast rate, and the the only way to keep going is to collect the piles of seeds which are scattered along the route. Road Runner faints with hunger should five seeds be missed, and Wile E then retrieves him at leisure. Certain seeds are not all they seem, and are rich in iron filings. Once these are lodged in Road Runner's gizzard, Wile E Coyote uses his powerful magnet to slow him down.

Trucks, avalanches, crevasses and mines appear on later levels, representing deadly hazards. These also kill Wile E, and if Road Runner goads him into a hazard, extra points are scored.

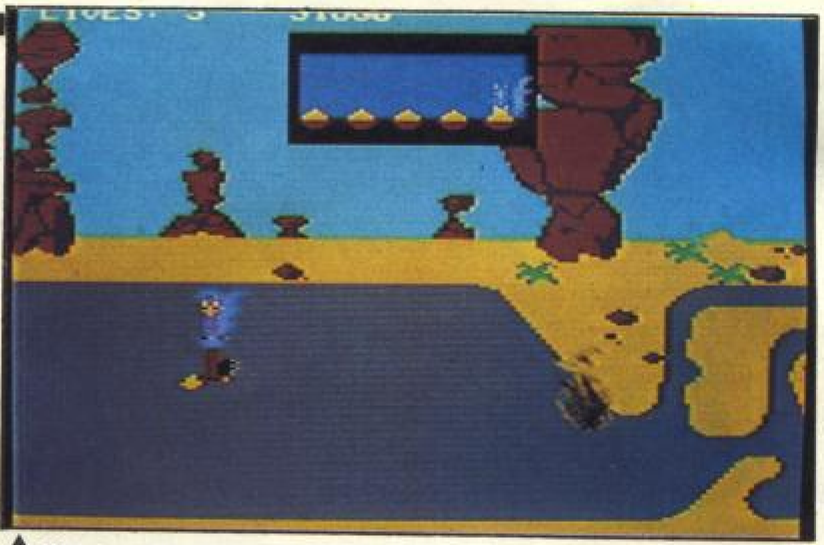
Other features include invisible paint spilled upon the road, which makes either creature invisible when touched, and lemonade which is drunk for bonus score. An additional score is also awarded when Road Runner plays chicken and lets his ravenous pursuer get close and then runs off, poking out his tongue as he goes! Meep! Meep!



I love the arcade game – and this is about as close as you're going to get on the 64. The graphics and sound are spot-on, and the gameplay is remarkably similar. The only bugbear is the incredibly frustrating cassette multi-load. Long, long waits have to be endured between levels, and even more waiting occurs after a game has finished and the short cut option is used. The disk version is great though, with only a couple of seconds' break in the hectic action. If you're a 1541 owning Road Runner **fan, buy the Commodore version post haste. Even the most patient of C2N owners should think about the long-winded nature of the cassette format first.**



Anyone wanting an exact replica of the arcade version of Road Runner **need look no further than this latest US Gold offering. Unfortunately, for me this represents its greatest flaw, since I wasn't that keen on the stand-up version. The gameplay is very simple and chase games, however well done, aren't really state of the art in gaming. Having said that, this is an extremely competent conversion – especially the sprites, which are superbly animated and have heaps of character. The music is great too, and serves to induce a rising feeling of panic. Cassette owners will be overjoyed to hear that the multi-load system is one of the worst I've seen, practically crippling an otherwise fun game. An awful point is the fact that play begins immediately the level has loaded. If caught off-guard, Wile E. slides straight on and grabs you before you have a chance to react – truly annoying!**



▲ **Watch out Roadrunner – Wile's behind you!**



The lack of consistency in the gameplay always put me off the Road Runner **arcade machine, and I feel that this conversion has not improved the situation at all. It's quite disorientating to play a game where the levels vary in difficulty as much as they do in this one – a pleasant romp can turn into an impossible trap in a matter of seconds. This may be desirable to some players, but it only served to put me off completely. This is a pity really, because** Road Runner **does have some strong points. The graphics are excellent, and a great degree of the original cartoon's sense of humour has been retained. If you're a disk-drive owner who liked the arcade machine then I can recommend this – if not . . .**

CASSETTE

PRESENTATION 67%
The lack of options and painfully slow cassette loader mar an otherwise polished product.

GRAPHICS 80%
Colourful, smoothly scrolling backdrops and well animated sprites, fully capturing the flavour of both the cartoon and arcade game.

SOUND 79%
Four whacky tunes and great spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 71%
Quite playable, but the long pauses between levels detract from the enjoyment.

LASTABILITY 57%
Plenty of action across 12 levels, but the multi-load would try the patience of a saint.

OVERALL 69%
A very competent and playable conversion which is sadly marred by an awkward cassette multi-load.

DISK

PRESENTATION 77%
No options, but slick and polished nonetheless.

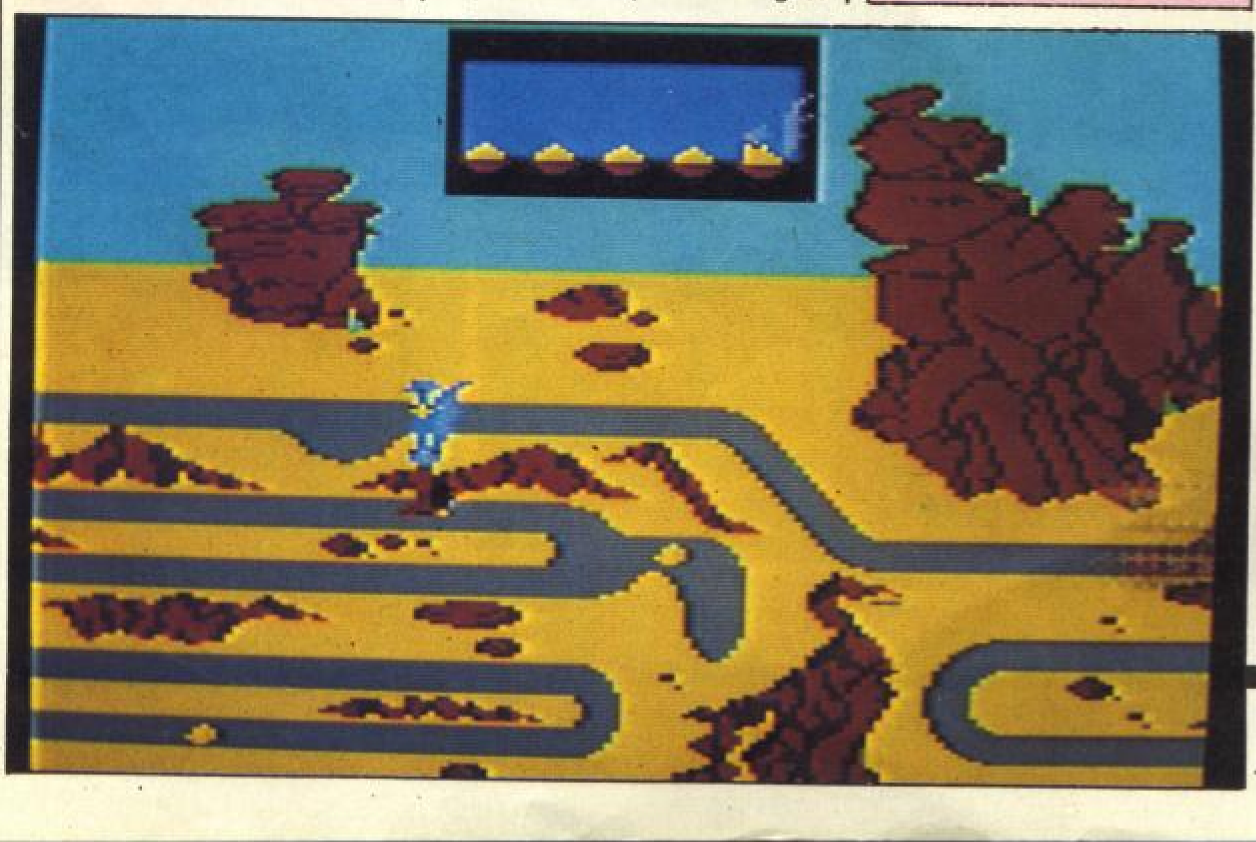
GRAPHICS 80%
See Cassette.

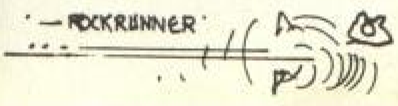
SOUND 79%
See Cassette..

HOOKABILITY 80%
Instantly playable and enjoyable road running action.

LASTABILITY 74%
Twelve levels of increasingly tough action should keep the toughest of road hogs engrossed.

OVERALL 74%
A competent and playable conversion which is very true to the original.






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RE-BOUNDER

Gremlin Graphics, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick or keys

● Gremlin's effervescent tennis ball returns to save the world

Bounder's back! That lovable, felt-covered vulcanised bundle of bounces has returned to provide more high-flying antics on a series of platforms floating high above the world. These aerial pathways are under the control of the evil Overlord, and it's our heroic tennis ball's task to free the suspended pathways once again.

The action is displayed from above, with the continually bouncing bounder bouncing anywhere that the landscape allows. Failure to hit a solid floating platform or piece of machinery on a downward bounce results in Bounder hurtling Earthward, and consequently a loss of one of his five lives.

The mission begins with the landscape scrolling from left to right. Aliens immediately fly into attack, with their touch reducing Bounder's pressure – represented by a fatally shrinking bar. Bounder has an unlimited supply of balls to shoot at the attackers, although the shot's effect depends on the ball's pressure. Every so often a pump station is encountered, and when touched gives the player the opportunity to increase Bounder's pressure by waggling the joystick furiously. After five seconds the quest continues.

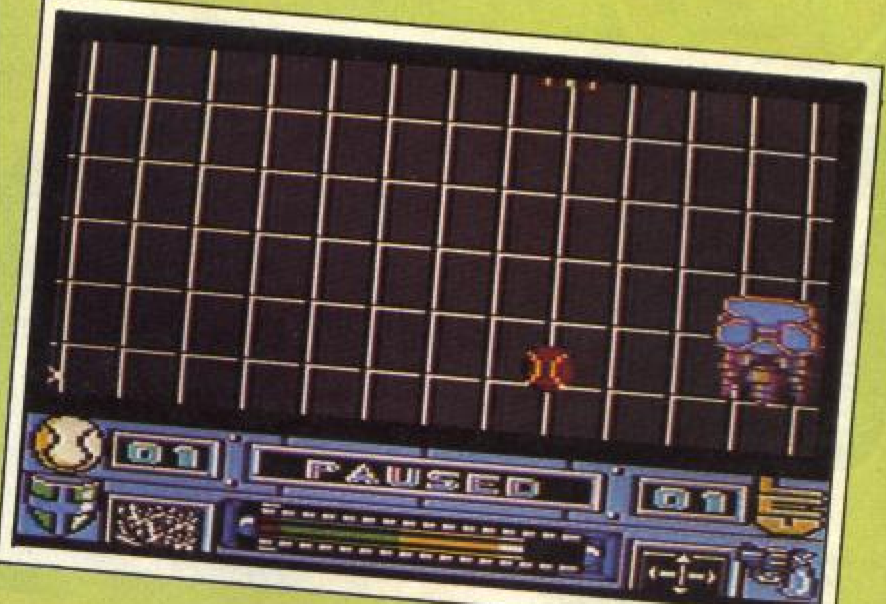
Some platforms are marked with exclamation marks or question marks, giving a mystery bonus when bounced upon. Some squares crumble or disappear –



Just a few minutes is all it takes for Re-Bounder to become incredibly addictive, and once it's got a grip on you it's very hard to put the joystick down. The graphics are incredible, with superb bas-relief effects and smooth parallax scrolling. The sound is the only slight disappointment – the tune seems good at first, but it quickly becomes annoying. The spot effects are weak too – but the brilliant gameplay more than makes up for these minor flaws. The original is a classic – and Re-Bounder looks like it's going to follow in its footsteps.

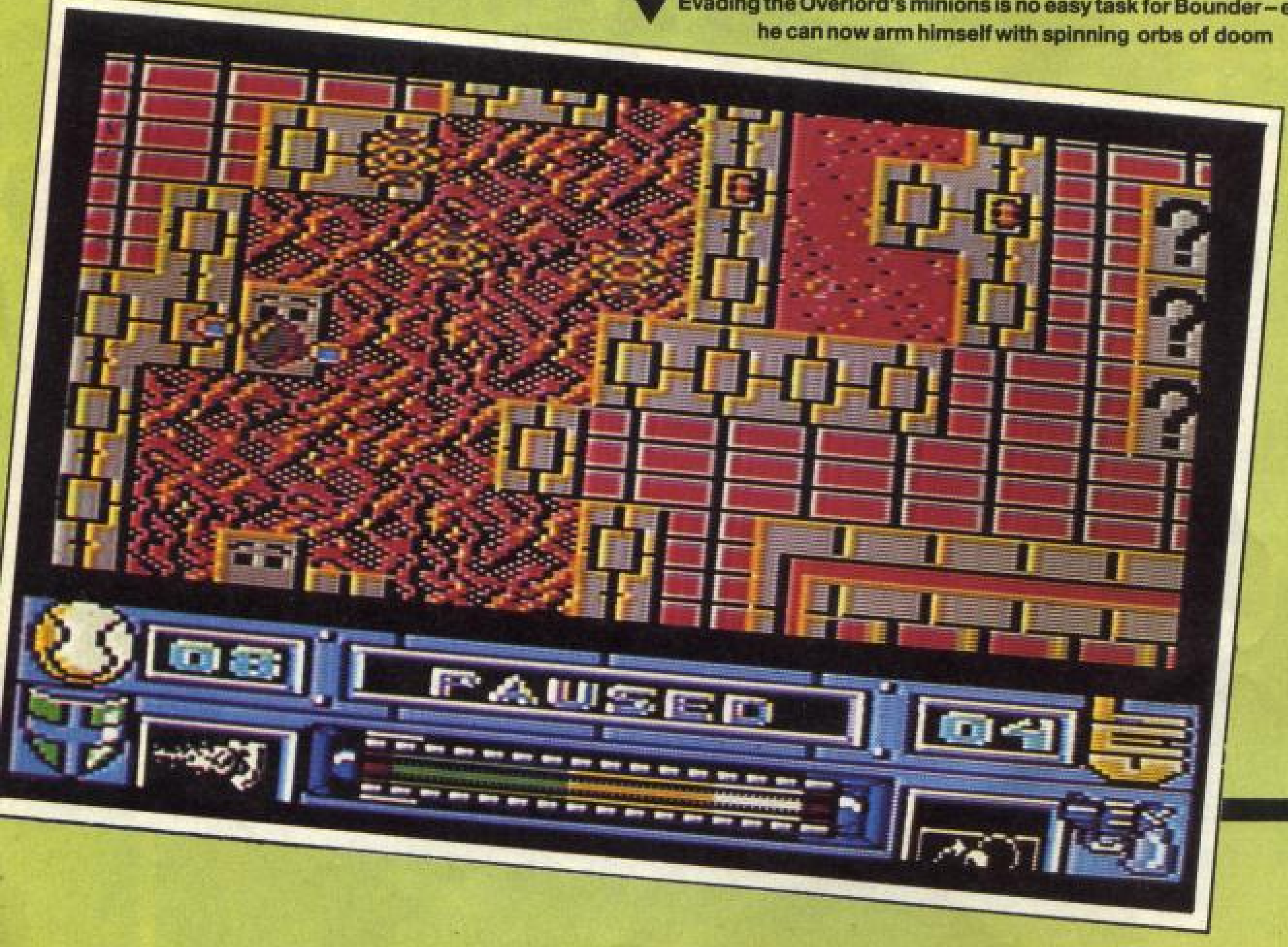


▲ Re-b-b-b-bounding along over one of the splendid parallax platforms



▲ Bounder's life is full of ups and downs – especially when he's trying to shake off an elusive Guardian

▼ Evading the Overlord's minions is no easy task for Bounder – even though he can now arm himself with spinning orbs of doom







The time of sequels is upon us yet again – but at least this one's better than the original. Re-Bounder **takes the first** Bounder **theme, improves on it . . . and then improves on it again. The gameplay's better, the graphics are better, the effects are better, the parallax is incredible and the music is . . . well, four out of five ain't bad. Having the screens scroll in all four directions is a great idea, and really gives the game a new dimension.** Re-Bounder **has managed to retain the playability of its predecessor – but it's far more flexible, and should hold the attention for longer than** Bounder **ever did.**



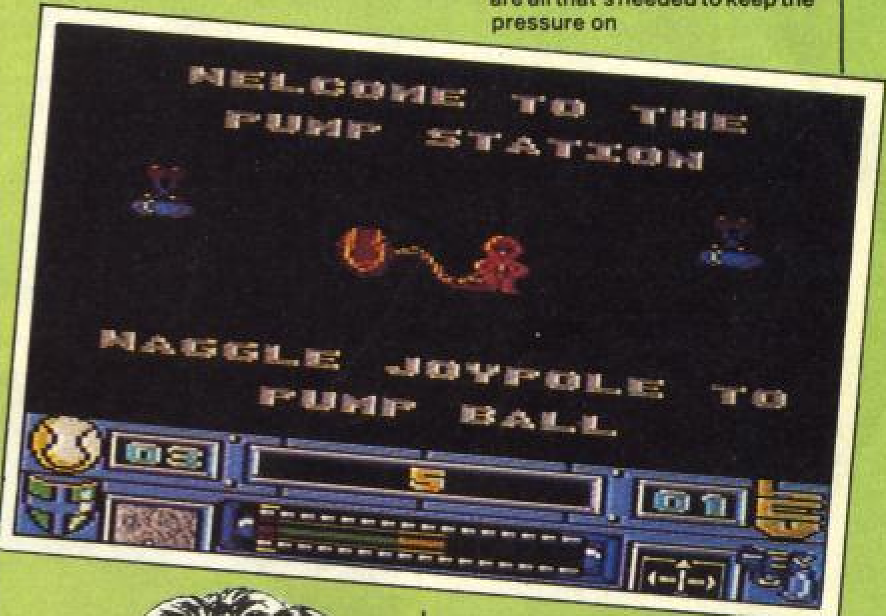
others set off a deadly reaction. Other deadly hazards include lava pools, air vents and walls.

Extra weaponry and armour are discovered along the way in the form of red tokens. These are picked up and added to Bounder when touched. Extra weapons are vital to success, as the aliens on later levels become increasingly vicious and more difficult to destroy. Sixteen smart bombs are also available for use against the Overlord.

Junctions appear at regular intervals. The scrolling then stops, and a large Guardian appears and attacks with fervour. A hail of fire sees off this menace, and the rotund hero continues his adventure – the available pathways being indicated by glowing arrows. The journey may then continue scrolling upwards, downwards or vertically – depending the direction chosen.

There is only one route to the Overlord, and if a wrong turn is taken and a dead end reached the mission ends. Therefore a good map or memory is useful – along with well developed dextral abilities!

▼ **Regular visits to the pump station are all that's needed to keep the pressure on**





▼ **An armour-clad Bounder proves a worthwhile adversary for the Overlord's minions**





Take all of the playability and addictiveness of Bounder, **add some brilliant graphics, a bit of shooting, extra firepower and armour, multi-directionally scrolling levels, a whole host of puzzles (not to mention some tricky mapping) . . . and what have you got?** Re-Bounder! **All the flavour of the original is here, but the additional features and vastly improved gameplay have really added spice. So much so, that after playing for ages the game was still managing to throw up surprises. The only annoying thing is having to end the mission because you've reached a dead end – but even that compels you to go back to the beginning and start again. Look this up even if you disliked the original –** Re-Bounder **is an excellent game in its own right.**

PRESENTATION 82%
Well presented throughout, including a brilliant title screen. However, the self-indulgent scrolling message is a little unnecessary.

GRAPHICS 93%
Superb parallax effects, great sprites and some gorgeous colour.

SOUND 70%
An average Daglish soundtrack complemented by some fairly standard effects.

HOOKABILITY 89%
Fiendishly addictive from the start, even if death comes all too quickly.

LASTABILITY 87%
The profusion of variety and new features should keep you bouncing and exploring for weeks.

OVERALL 90%
A brilliant sequel, and a superb game in itself.

THE ASTONISHING ADVENTURES OF

MR WEEMS AND THE SHE VAMPIRES

Piranha, £8.95 cass, £13.95 disk, joystick or keys

Tracking down vampires isn't only the sport of the Van Helsing family – Mr Weems also thinks that it's a pretty good way of passing the time. His latest escapade involves tracking down and killing the Great She Vampire, and this release from Piranha gives you full control over his blood-filled adventure.



And still the Gauntlet **clones come! This one is simply appalling, combining all the worst elements of the genre with dire graphics and abysmal sound. The gameplay is awful. You can destroy all the pots on one screen, go off, return a second later and they're back – monsters and all! The control method is really fiddly, and when nearing the border it's all too easy to accidently move off screen and end up in a middle of a load of pots – resulting in a swift demise. This frustrating element is made even worse by the pathetic collision detection on the monsters. The £9 price tag is rather hopeful – I certainly wouldn't part with it for this.**

The action is set in She Vampire's six-level, flick screen mansion. The enormous house is filled with a maze of rooms and corridors, barred by locked doors. Mr Weems progresses by collecting keys and opening the doors which block his route to higher levels. Hidden doors and magic transporter blocks also provide help along the way, but these have to be found by trial and error.

Spread throughout the spooky hall are coffins and pots which break open to reveal Giant Bats, lumbering Frankenstein monsters and vile She Vampires. As soon as they see the unfortunate hero, they give chase and suck his blood, represented numerically below the main display. If this number falls to zero, Mr Weems dies. Luckily for our mild-mannered hero, there are bottles of blood lying about which replenish his lost corpuscles. He can also take a garlic pill to give himself a short-term immunity to others' blood-sucking attentions.



When are we ever going to see the end of these poor Gauntlet **clones? Admittedly the scenario is novel, but the gameplay is identical to that which** Druid **started on the 64 a year ago – only a lot worse. Worse still, the whole game looks absolutely awful, with incredibly crude sprites and backdrops. In fact, the way the monsters wobble around the screen like cripples with bunions is about the only entertaining aspect of this almost terminally boring game. Steer well clear of** Mr Weems **– it may well drive you batty.**

Not content with merely smelling like a French chef, Weems also totes a garlic-firing gun with limitless cloves. A couple of accurate shots from this sends a blood-sucking monster back from whence it came. The gun is also used to smash pots and destroy the creatures before they have a chance to emerge.

On reaching level six, our vampire enthusiast finds the Great She Vampire's penthouse lair. There, he kills her at his leisure, but only if he has collected a stake, mallet, mega-garlic piece, mirror and crucifix *en route*.

If he manages to despatch the Great She Vampire, Weems must make like Seb Coe and leave the vampire-ridden Mansion before her enraged minions seek him out. What a strange hobby . . .

▼ **Once bitten, twice shy – Mr Weems makes haste for the nearest exit**





I suppose Mr Weems **can be pigeonholed along with the other multitude of** Gauntlet **lookalikes – except that it's one of the worst to have shuffled onto this mortal coil so far. It's absolutely pathetic, looks a complete mess and plays the same. I couldn't believe how easy it is to die – I had about five goes in as many minutes! One** major **annoyance is the fact that leaving a location and then re-entering results in the re-appearance of all the baddies that I'd just slaughtered; often causing immediate death. This is a surprising release from Piranha, just when they looked like they were getting their act together.** Mr Weems**? No fangs . . .**

▼ **The balding superhero continues his fun-filled frolics in the lair of the She-Vampires**



PRESENTATION 52%
A useful redefine key option, but otherwise messy and slipshod.

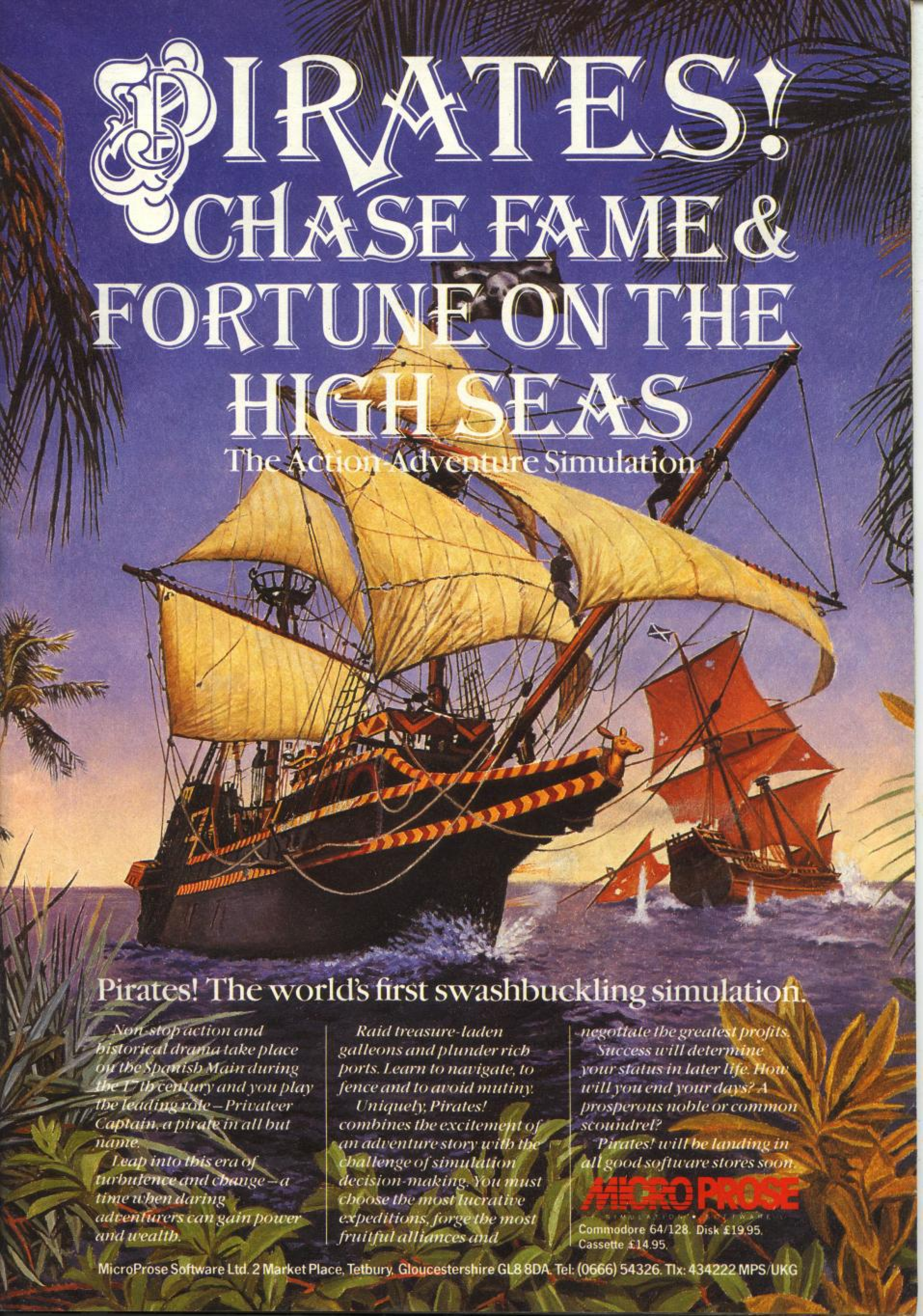
GRAPHICS 23%
Dreadful characters with amateurish and undetailed backdrops.

SOUND 8%
What's there is harsh on the ears, and very ineffective.

HOOKABILITY 30%
The messy screen layout and tricky control method destroy any initial enjoyment.

LASTABILITY 17%
Far too frustrating to provide any enjoyment.

OVERALL 19%
A poorly designed and executed *Gauntlet* derivative.


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REBEL

Virgin Games, £9.95 cass, joystick only

Agricultural operative THX2240 is not happy with her lot in life: working on the state controlled Soya plantation is a little too much like a concentration camp for her liking.

Already restless, the final straw is a threat of unconditional termination for failure to attend her crops. In a fit of anger, she decides to steal a Crowd Control Vehicle (CCV), and escape from the agricultural bloc. In short, she has turned rebel . . .

Throughout the complex, giant solar conductors are used to provide artificial sunlight for crops during bad weather. Their intense rays are directed around the plantation by means of solar reflectors – and these are so powerful they can be used for destructive purposes. This is how THX decides to escape the plant.

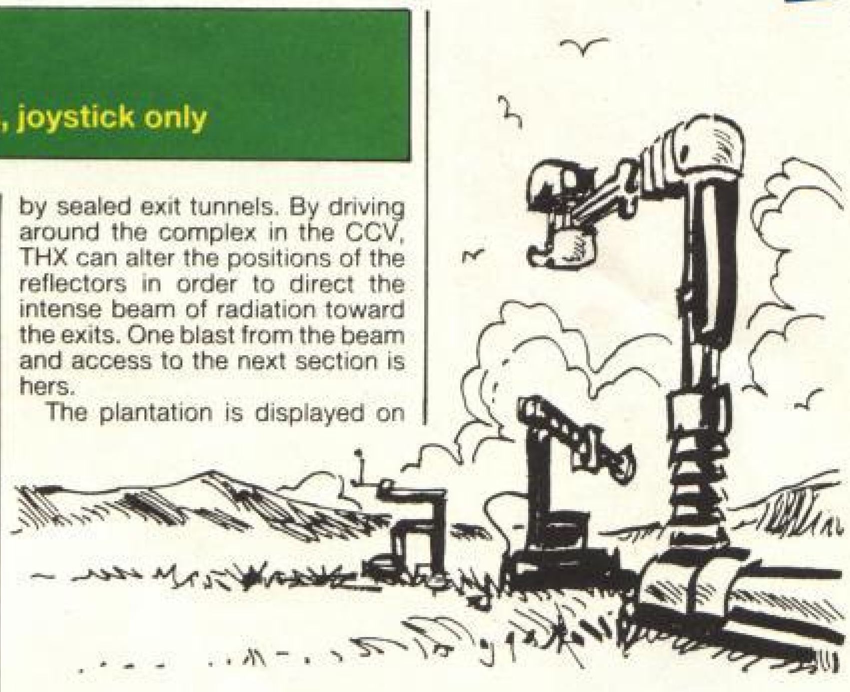
The different compounds within the agricultural bloc are separated by sealed exit tunnels. By driving around the complex in the CCV, THX can alter the positions of the reflectors in order to direct the intense beam of radiation toward the exits. One blast from the beam and access to the next section is hers.

The plantation is displayed on screen from an overhead viewpoint. The armoured vehicle is directed around the scrolling complex, collecting and turning reflectors as desired. Once correctly positioned, the solar generator can be fired to breach the exit, at which point the CCV appears in the next, more complex section.

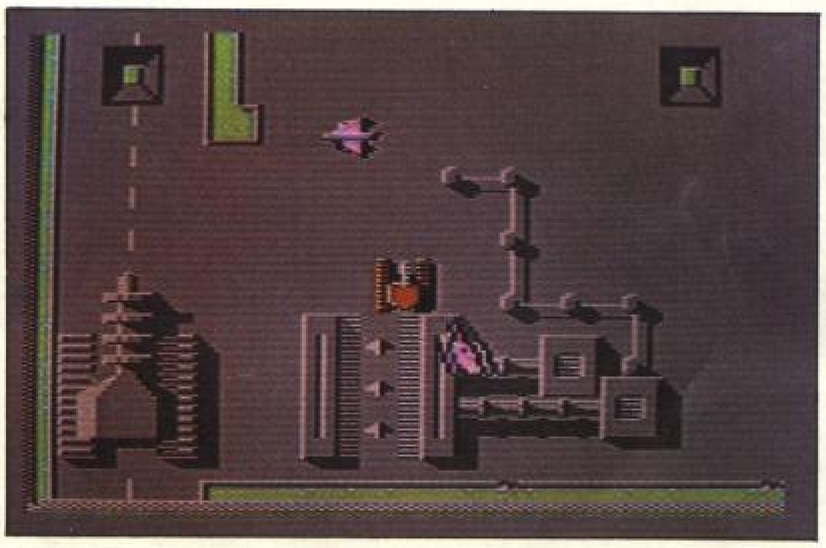
During THX's attempt to escape, police surveillance vehicles are constantly patrolling the grounds and flying overhead. Aircraft fire upon the CCV whenever it falls within range, and contact with the armoured patrol vehicles results in immediate termination. The CCV also carries weaponry and can protect itself from aerial attack, but the heavily armoured tanks must be avoided at all costs. Escape from this new world is by no means easy . . .



After the excellent Dan Dare **I expected a little more than an expansion of an idea from GOF's last game. Taken as a game in itself, it's fun and proves quite mind-taxing as you attempt to line up the lasers – but I never felt particularly excited by the action.** Rebel **is an enjoyable diversion, but doesn't really contain enough to warrant its expensive price tag.**



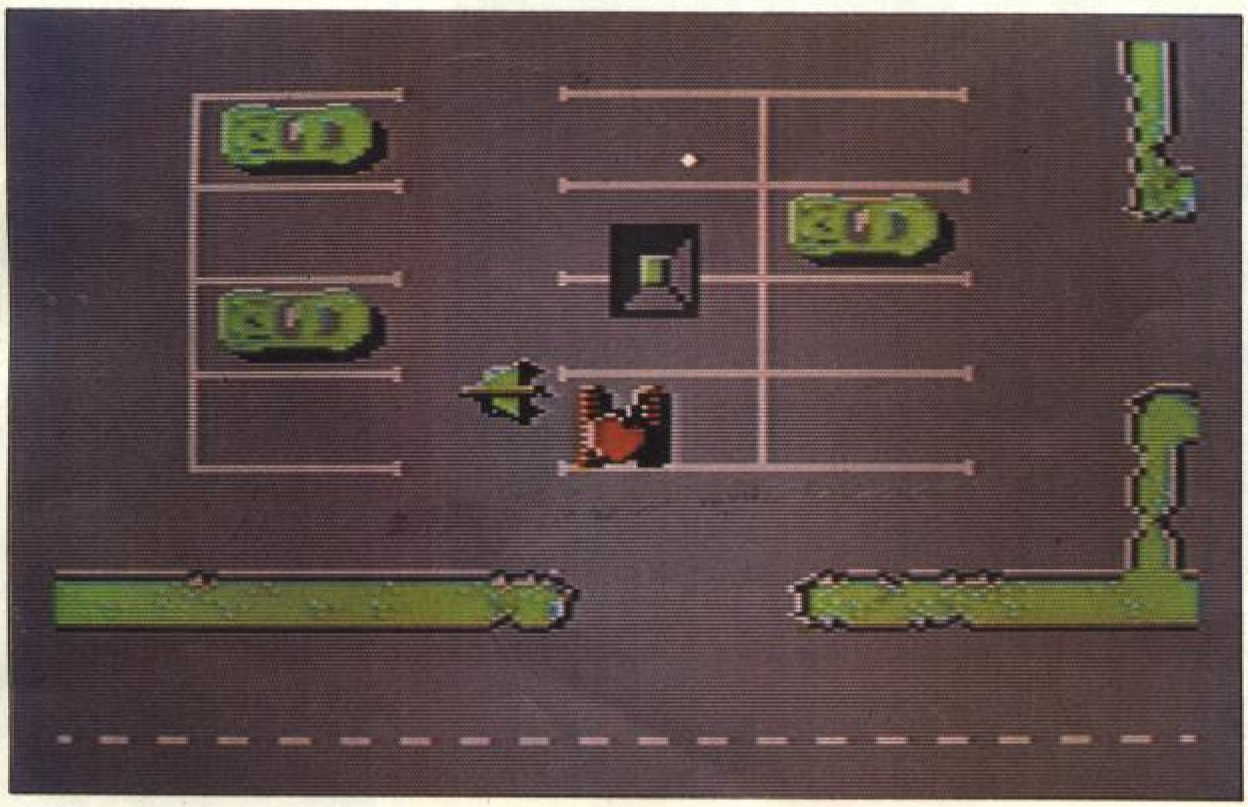
▶ **The huge Solar Beam Generator lies to the left of the screen – waiting for your signal**



▶ **One of the soya plantation's car parks appears, as you trundle onwards in your bid for freedom**



Anyone who has played the earlier Virgin classic Dan Dare **will immediately recognise this from the sub game where Dan has to destroy computers by bouncing a laser beam off mirrors, having first arranged them correctly. As such, it's quite enjoyable, having to work out where the reflectors should be placed, and then watching with glee as the beam whizzes around the plantation to destroy the exit portal. Unfortunately, the control method is clumsy and makes the game an awful lot harder to play than necessary. I would have preferred a more complex puzzle and the removal of the patrol craft, since they only serve to overcomplicate things and appear to have been included as an afterthought to liven things up a bit.**



PRESENTATION 53%
Decent documentation, but little else apart from a perfunctory title screen.

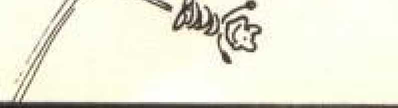
GRAPHICS 59%
The bas-relief backgrounds are spoiled by gaudy sprites.

SOUND 52%
Great title track, but little more than harsh white noise effects during the game.

HOOKABILITY 40%
The confusing control method leaves a lot to be desired.

LASTABILITY 58%
There's a game in there if you look for it.

OVERALL 61%
An initially rewarding, but ultimately unplayable development of an original concept.



ZZAP! TEST

CALIFORNIA GAMES

US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

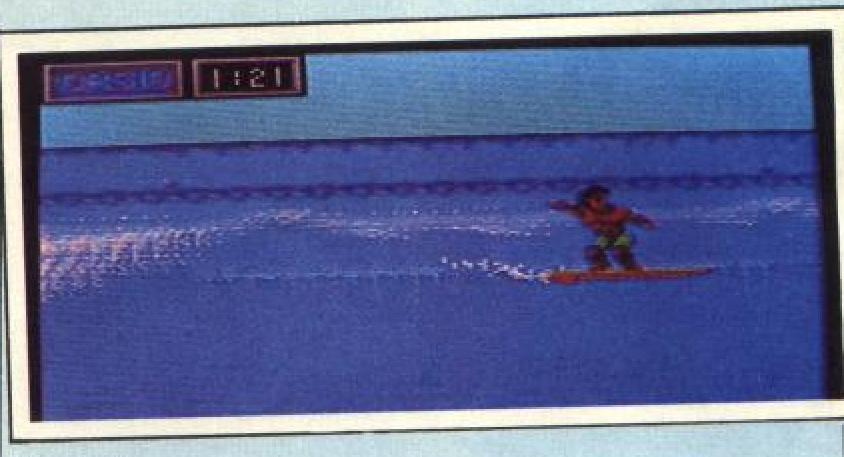
● Another stunning addition to the Epyx *Games* series



Having given you the opportunity to participate in seasonal sports in the *Summer* and *Winter Games* series, and to travel to distant lands in *World Games*, Epyx now offer you the chance to go to California and take part in some of the World's trendiest sports.

California Games is the fifth in the *Games* series, and boasts six new events. Those who've enjoyed the previous releases will recognise the now-standard options screen. This allows up to eight players to compete in all or some the events, practice an event or view the record table (the disk version automatically saves the highest scores for posterity).

When a competition starts, all players input their name and choose a sponsor (there are nine, including Casio and Kawasaki) before undertaking the following:



SURFING

The sport of the self-proclaimed Kings of Hawaii, surfing now takes place along the whole length of the California coastline. Now's your chance to shoot the curl, shred the tube or hang ten without even getting your feet wet. The screen displays the growing whitecap with your surfer lying on his board, preparing to catch the wave. Pressing the fire button sees the surfer stand up and begin his ride. The aim of the contest is to ride the wave for as long as possible, while attempting to enter the curl itself. Moving the joystick controls the direction of the board, and holding the fire button down allows sharper turns to be made and also slows the board down – effectively allowing the wave can catch up, and allowing you to enter the tube itself. A 'Wipe Out' is the term used for the premature separation of surfer and board. This occurs whenever you stray to far to the bottom of the wave and also if you get caught in the tube itself. The ride lasts for one and a half minutes, and at the end of your efforts, a group of laid-back beach bums hold up score cards to tell you how you fared.

What an amazing package! Six events filled with fun and sun, just begging to be played each time you switch on your computer. The beauty of the beast is that all six games are of an equally high standard, so the only problem is trying to decide which event to take part in first! Even in purely technical terms Epyx have somehow managed to surpass their own high standards – the pictures and sounds generated by this program are atmospheric beyond belief. The multi-load cassette may cause a few headaches, but the amount of enjoyment to be had is so high that even this inconvenience should only seem minor. California Games **is a real progression in the Epyx sports sim range – and surely there can't be a higher recommendation than that.**







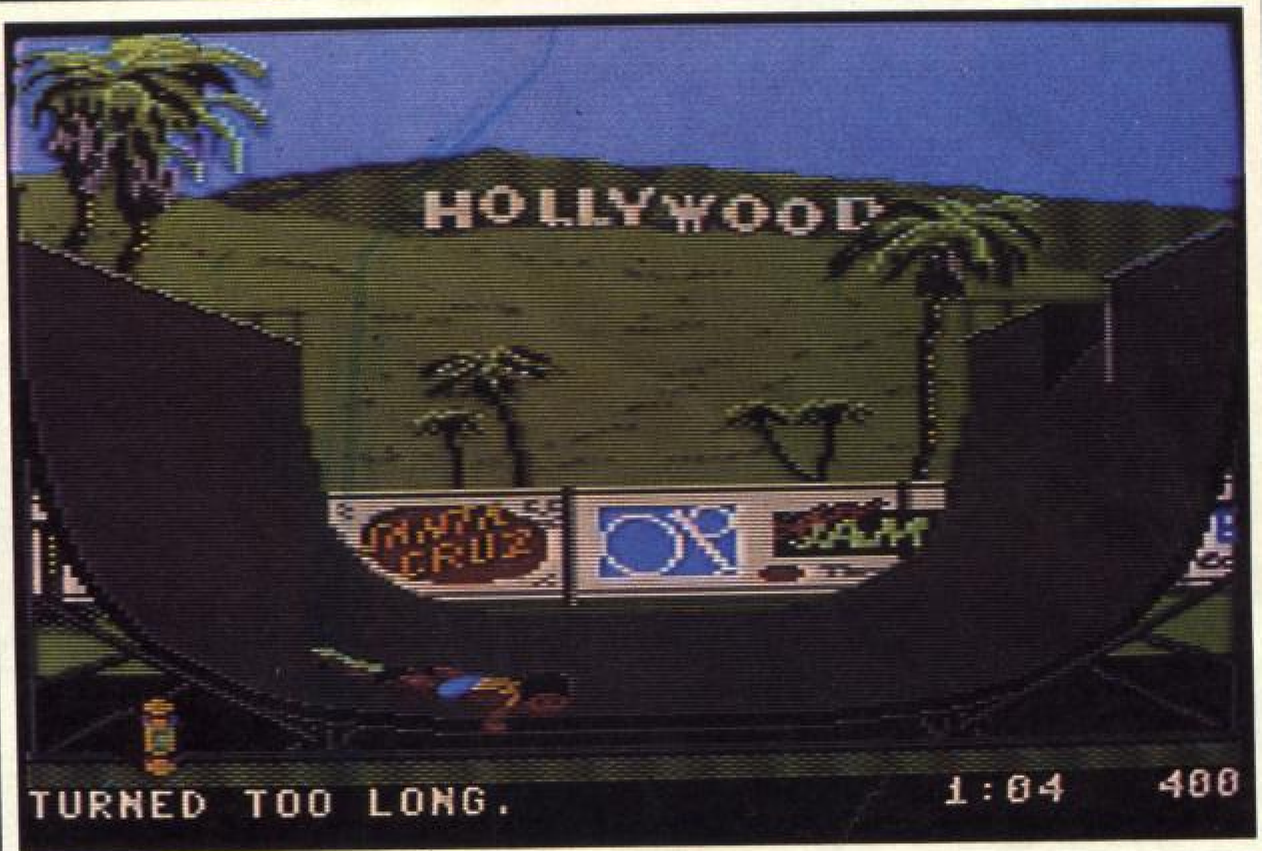
FLYING DISK

Set in a beautiful lakeside park, the frisbee event involves two people – a thrower and catcher. The objective is to hurl the disk to the catcher as accurately as possible. Points are awarded for the type of catch, either running, diving or overhead – and the less steps the catcher takes to reach the disk, the more the catch is worth. The player has three attempts to throw and catch the disk.





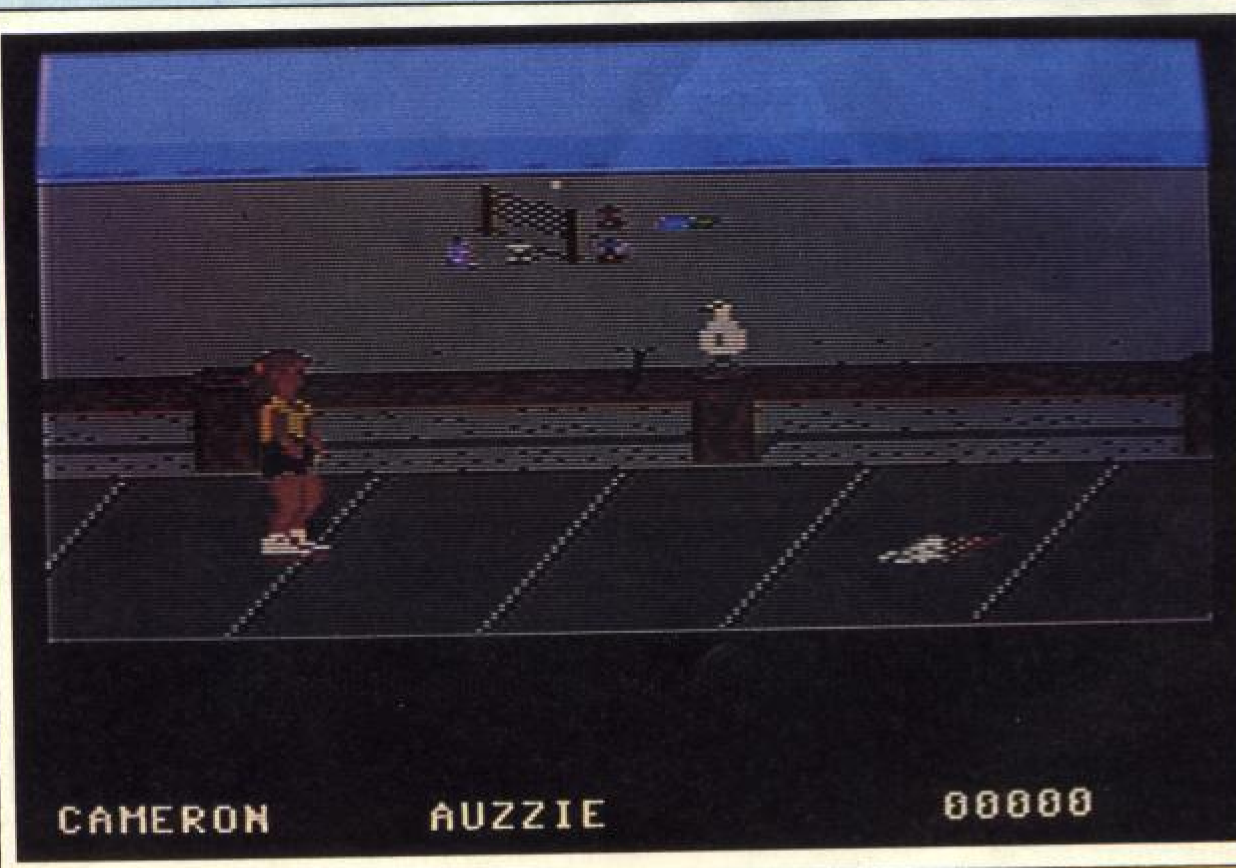
Gold Medals, it seems, are just like double decker buses – you wait all year for one, and then two come at once! Hot on the heels of Head Over Heels **comes the superb new Epyx release,** California Games**. Once again the American software house have exceeded both themselves and the limitations of the C64 to bring us another incredible – and somewhat laid-back – sports simulation. If you gather up all the superlatives from previous Epyx reviews and add them together, you just might go half-way towards describing** California Games**. Again the animation and graphics are without peer, and the six separate games join together perfectly to form a single, unbeatable package. Just for the record, the Surfing is my favourite – fun to play, relaxing to watch and flawless in its implementation. I love it.**



HALF PIPE

Become the most awesome dude on four wheels in this radical skateboarding event! A press of the fire button signals the skateboarder to push off from the starting ramp at the top. Up and down joystick movements accelerate the skater as he oscillates across the half-pipe, and a combination of the fire button and left and right on the joystick starts either an aerial turn, hand plant or kick turn, depending on the skater's position on the pipe when the joystick is toggled. Careful timing is essential during a manoeuvre, otherwise the skater falls and is 'wiped out'. The player is given one minute and 15 seconds or four wipe outs to complete as many stunts as possible. Go for it, and see if you can shake the pipe enough to cause an earthquake (that wasn't my fault – that was San Andreas' fault).







ROLLER SKATING

The beach boardwalk is a dangerous place for a non-skater, and Californian skaters are the coolest around. Getting from one end of the 'walk to the other while staying cool and doing stunts is the task that awaits you in this section. Your female on-screen counterpart begins at the far left of the boardwalk and has to traverse the length of the course, avoiding cracks in the pavement, grass, old pairs of sneakers and even flying beach balls. Repetitive movements of the joystick cause your skater's legs to move, while pressing the fire button causes her to leap in the air. Spins award you with extra points, and jumping spins over obstacles are awarded with correspondingly higher scores. ▶



ZZAP! TEST

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Sometimes I hate Epyx. They produce something seemingly unsurpassable like World Games, and you use every superlative in the book to sum up its brilliance. Then, a year later, they release California Games, to boldly go where no-one has gone before . . . and produce something *even better*! The gameplay is by far the best in the Games series, incorporating (and you'd better believe this) better graphics and animation and even more depth and variety than ever before! There's no getting near the limits of the score within a few plays either. All events, especially BMX Riding, Foot Bag and the two Skate events, require an awful lot of practice before you even start scoring – developing your skills is another matter entirely! California Games is quite simply the apex of computer sports gaming at the present time. Recommending it is a formality.







BMX BIKE RACING

The Californian desert is the scene for the toughest of the Californian games – BMX Bike Racing. Seated on your dirt bike at the top of the first ramp, the course extends to the right of the screen and must be completed in two minutes or under. You are judged on the number and duration of stunts accomplished, and bonus points are awarded for the time remaining on completion of the course. There are a variety of jumps, burns and low bumps to be negotiated safely as well as rocks, tyres and logs which can unseat the careless biker. Each player is allowed three 'easy' falls (ie running into objects and tumbling from your bike) or one 'serious' fall (where a stunt goes wrong and you fall on your head). Any further falls result in the end of the attempt, and the total score is then displayed.





FOOT BAG

Every Californian has a foot bag, or hackysack as they're otherwise known. These are small, leather-covered bean bags which are carried around and used in moments of boredom – such as when you're waiting in a queue to hire a windsurfer. In this event the objective is to keep juggling the bag for one and a quarter minutes using only your head, knees or feet. The screen displays a front view of the player, who moves left and right, jumps and turns around. As soon as fire is pressed the player kicks the ball in the air. When the ball drops the fire button is pressed to make the player kick at it again. Timing and positioning is crucial – the player tries his best to keep the ball up, but if he's too far away, or kicks out late or early, he misses. Points are awarded for keeping the ball in the air as long as possible and extra scores are awarded for performing stunts (such as spinning between kicks).

PRESENTATION 96%
A superb array of options lacking only a restart. The multi-load cassette is long winded, but works well nevertheless.

GRAPHICS 97%
Outstanding animation and backdrops.

SOUND 84%
An individual tune for each event, and plenty of atmospheric spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 98%
Instantly playable and constantly rewarding.

LASTABILITY 96%
Six brilliant events, combining depth of play and variety – you'll be record breaking for months.

OVERALL 97%
Epyx surpass themselves yet again with another incredible sports simulation. Don't miss it.



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ZZZZAP ZEALOUSLY WITH ZYNAPS!

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BLASTING fans are well catered for this month with Hewson's Sizzling new release, *Zynaps* (see full review on page eight). And you stand a chance of winning a copy – or better still, a copy of *Zynaps* AND a complete Lazer Tag outfit.

The set includes two light sensitive packs which are strapped to both players' chest. Each combatant is armed with a pistol that fires a beam of light and a direct hit to the chest results in a flash of lights, a beep and . . . 'aaargh', you're dead. Fun fun fun for all the family!

To own this marvellous weapons system, you have to impress us first . . . study the section of alien star chart from the *Zynaps* sector below. Now design your own fictitious constellation (along the lines of the Great Bear or the Plough for instance). Base them on anyone you like – the magazine staff, programmers, personalities . . . use your imagination, and include some mythology surrounding the unearthly constellation. Funny or serious, the most imaginative entry wins the kit, with 30 constellation – sorry, consolation – prizes of a *Zynaps* game. So, get those entries rolling in to Glenys Powell at **ZYNAPS STAR SIGN COMPETITION, ZZAP! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ**. Entries should arrive no later than September 10th, and please don't forget to include your name, full address and telephone number if possible.

PIRATES!

Microprose, £14.95 cass, £19.95 disk, joystick only.



Sail Ho! Cap'n. Jolly Roger off the starboard bow!' If these bucanneering words stir your blood, the latest release from Microprose should be of interest. *Pirates!* follows your fortunes as a Privateer of the 1600's attempting to increase your personal wealth and status.

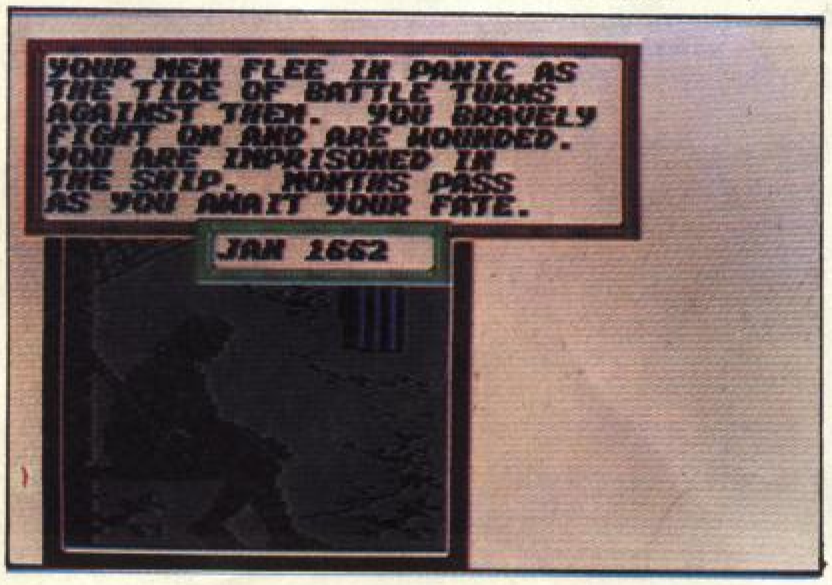
Before a voyage is undertaken an options screen is displayed allowing the player to begin a new career, load in a saved character or command one of six famous expeditions. All actions are controlled from a series of highlighted option/menu panels.

A new career requires the construction of a character – with the personality built from the following factors: name, nationality, level of play (apprentice, journeyman, adventurer or swashbuckler). A special skill, such as fencing, gunnery or navigation is also chosen.

Your career starts with a duel with the Captain of your current vessel. Winning puts you in charge of the ship whereas defeat puts you afloat in a tiny boat with a handful of fellow mutineers. The action is set in the Caribbean, from Vera Cruz in the West, to Barbados in the East, and from Bermuda in the North, to Panama in the South. A map is included in the packaging and features all 57 ports that may be visited.

Your vessel is controlled via the joystick and is directed anywhere within the multi-directionally scrolling map. Winds and distances have to be considered when a destination is chosen – otherwise food or water supplies may expire.

► Obviously Captain Cameron's luck has started to run out . . .



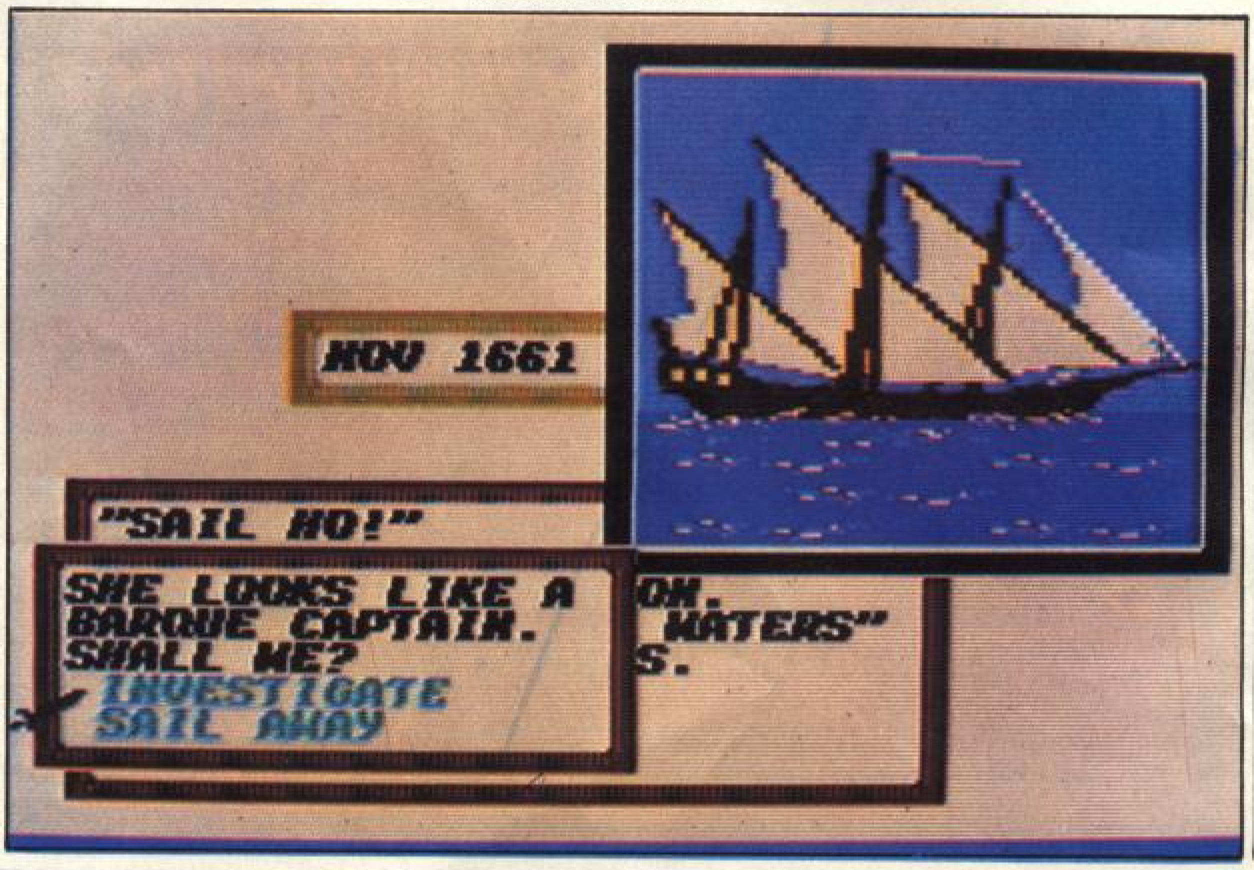
► The small slice of the West Indies lies waiting for you to explore



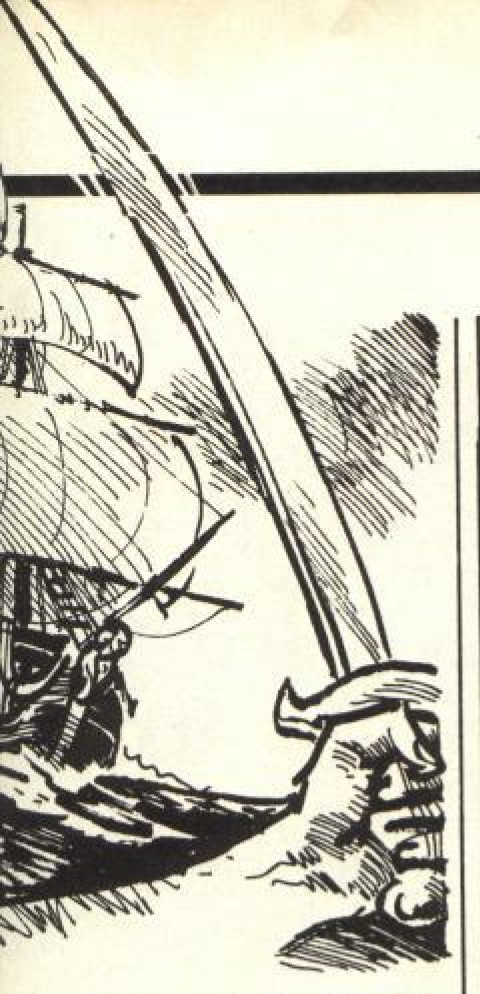
▼ Your vessel runs into a barque of unknown origin – should you investigate or sail away?



This is one of the first games where I've really wished my character would die. If you get off to a bad start, you can stay in a rut and keep sailing around for hours, getting caught and being rescued without getting anywhere. It's a shame that there isn't more of an emphasis on developing a character. Gaining property is fine, but morale and physical abilities remain unaffected throughout – even if imprisoned or victorious. It would have been great if you could build up a character along those parameters and the 'life' 'lived' until either retirement or death – like a pilot in Gunship. Pirates! has plenty of historic content, and hours and hours of play if you're willing to persevere – but whether or not it's worth £20 is a matter between you and your wallet.







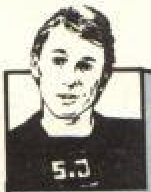
Ports are either friendly, neutral or enemy-held. When your ship nears a port, a menu sheet appears with a series of options which allows you to sneak into port, sail in or even attack it. Entering a port gives you the chance to visit the Governor or a tavern, trade with a merchant or divide up the plunder.

The Governor of the settlement tells of the current situation between nations and may also confer upon you the honours that your efforts have earned, such as a letter of marque for your ship, or even a promotion and a gift of land. A friendly merchant trades with you, allowing plundered goods and unwanted vessels to be sold off.

At sea you are alerted if a ship is sighted, and are then given the option to investigate. If you choose to attack, the two ships are shown on screen from an overhead viewpoint. The main objective is to come alongside the enemy ship and give a broadside of cannon fire. Repeated blasting reduces the number of men and cannon onboard – of course you also run the risk of having your own ship destroyed.



Though Pirates! **is initially impressive, I found that after a while I was just constantly repeating myself. Sailing into port, trading, talking, leaving port . . . only the odd attack broke up the action. It's annoying to keep being rescued by your 'mates', as it means there's no real end to the game – you can just go on and on. There's plenty of accurate history, but the problem is that the gameplay is only mildly challenging, and eventually becomes repetitive. When you consider what else you can buy for £20,** Pirates! **seems to be very much overpriced.**



Microprose have released a very commendable attempt at an interactive program, but unfortunately it doesn't play half as well as expected, and for all the complexity and depth it actually presents very little challenge. It's impossible to die – you can end up in a dungeon, or as a castaway on an island, but eventually you are released to continue your career. This is annoying, because there's no risk involved and therefore no challenge as you can never lose. For all the available choices there are only 12 or so that actually physically affect the gameplay. I found this to be too restrictive and limiting, especially when in combat or when owning more than one ship. For all my niggling, I did have several hours of enjoyable play from Pirates!, **but then I didn't have to pay £20 for the privilege.**

Touching the enemy ship allows your crew to board her and indulge in hand-to-hand combat. The enemy Captain approaches you for a duel of swords before the ship either falls into your hands, or you are captured and imprisoned.

NOTE: At the time of going to press, the cassette version of Pirates was not yet released. Therefore, the ratings at the bottom of the page relate to the disk version only. We'll bring you a separate set of ratings as soon as we receive a copy of the game on cassette.

DISK ONLY RATINGS

PRESENTATION 84%
Superb packaging, and easy to use (if occasionally flawed) menu system.

GRAPHICS 51%
Weak static pictures which lose a lot of the atmosphere. The combat sequence is also poorly implemented.

SOUND 32%
Little more than a few naval style jingles and an ineffective wind noise.

HOOKABILITY 78%
A few cursory glances of the instruction manual and you're under sail.

LASTABILITY 61%
Plenty of missions and hidden quests, but the gameplay lacks substance.

OVERALL 68%
A rather disappointing release which fails to capture the imagination in the same way that Defender of the Crown did.

REALM

Firebird, £1.99 cass, keyboard only

With the sudden demise of the Planetary Orbiting Co-ordinator, our Solar system has become unstable and its component planets are drifting away from the Sun.

To remedy this dangerous situation, a remote droid, codenamed XR3, has been placed under your control. Using this machine, you may enter the Co-ordinator's inner sanctum, seek out the missing planets and replace them in their correct positions.

The interior of the Co-ordinator is displayed as a full screen scrolling maze, with XR3 situated at the centre. Bonus Crowns are littered throughout the maze and have to be picked up, a task requiring the negotiation of puzzles and traps. Locked doors block the path of progression throughout the maze. These can only be opened by standing the XR3 next to blue arrow markers – but first you have to discover what marker opens which door.

Deeper into the maze puzzle-solving require the use of objects which lie around. Wire, batteries and oil are all necessary for the successful completion of the mission.

If a situation is entered whereby XR3 becomes trapped, you have the option of aborting the mission, which effectively gives you a second attempt at the maze without restarting completely. XR3 is transported back to the beginning of the maze, with all of the objects collected so far remaining in his possession.

Using the abort function more than twice results in the destruction of your droid, and the mission is terminated. XR3 also meets an untimely end on contact with the skull and crossbones, which make up part of the maze wall.



Games don't come any more unexciting than this. Travelling around a very large, empty maze, collecting things and opening doors is particularly monotonous, especially when there's no urgency to the task and nothing to liven things up. Playing became a chore after a couple of sessions, and I was more than glad to turn it off. The graphics and sound are just as forgettable as the gameplay. If they could produce Realm **in pill form, insomnia would be a thing of the past . . .**



Ignore the sci-fi type scenario, Realm **is quite simply a maze game with puzzles. If you enjoy trekking back and forth over the same screens time and time again, trying to find the correct key for the correct door then all is well and good. Personally, I find this sort of thing tiresome and ultimately boring.** Realm **is very, very ordinary and offers nothing that would convince me to add it to my shopping list – least of all playability.**

PRESENTATION 57%
Appalling title screen and no options.

GRAPHICS 48%
Colourful, but nothing to write home about.

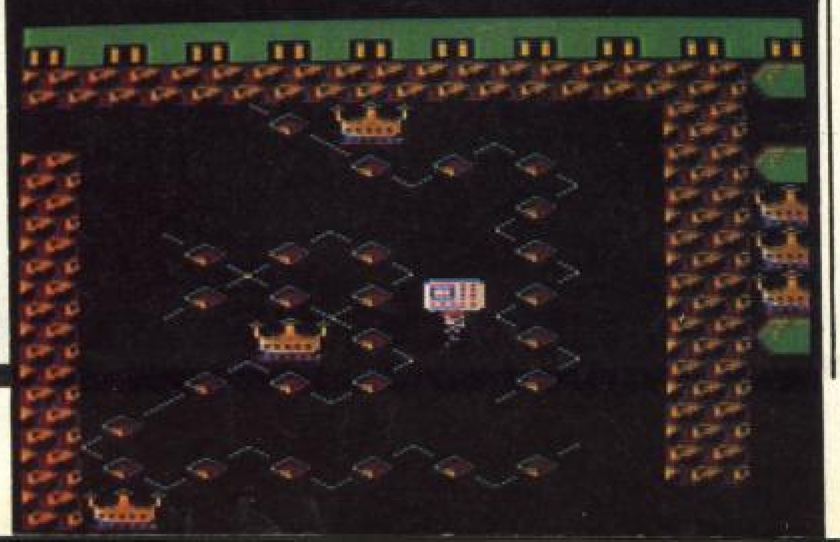
SOUND 17%
A few awkward beeps and bloops.

HOOKABILITY 35%
Lacks action and immediate reward.

LASTABILITY 31%
The initial feeling of desperation never really wears off.

OVERALL 34%
Maze gaming made tedious.

► Collecting the crowns rewards your remote droid with a hefty bonus



EXOLON

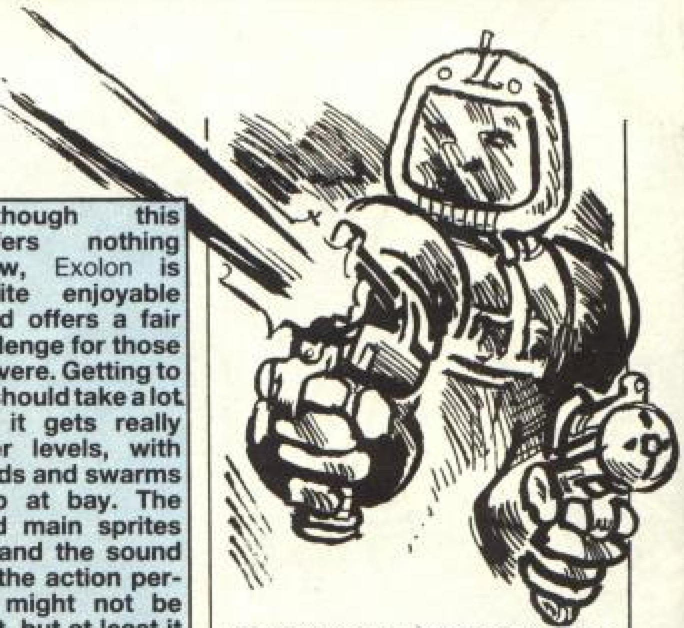
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

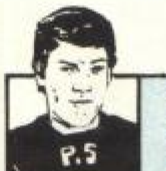
As an explorer, you're used to living a life of danger – but you've never experienced anything like this. At first all seems quiet, but suddenly all hell breaks loose. Strange aliens begin to attack, and guns and gun emplacements emerge from underground and start firing. Now you have to reach your ship and escape – a task which requires travelling through 125 flick screens.

The hero is armed with a hundred-round laser rifle which is used to despatch the many flying aliens, and ten grenades which are thrown at the machinery and rocks which block the way. Extra ammo is picked up along the way, with the supply also replenished when one of your nine lives are lost.

The action is viewed side-on, and the hero is guided from left to right across each screen – there is no turning back. Some screens are bare, apart from swarms of flying aliens. Others are crowded with machinery or deadly guns which take aim as soon as the hero comes near. Mines and hydraulic plungers also appear from below the planet's surface and have to be jumped.

Occasionally a dressing unit is encountered. This is entered to add an exoskeleton and double laser rifle to your armament. When 25 screens are traversed, a bonus is awarded and the mission continues until all nine lives are lost, or the safety of the ship is reached.

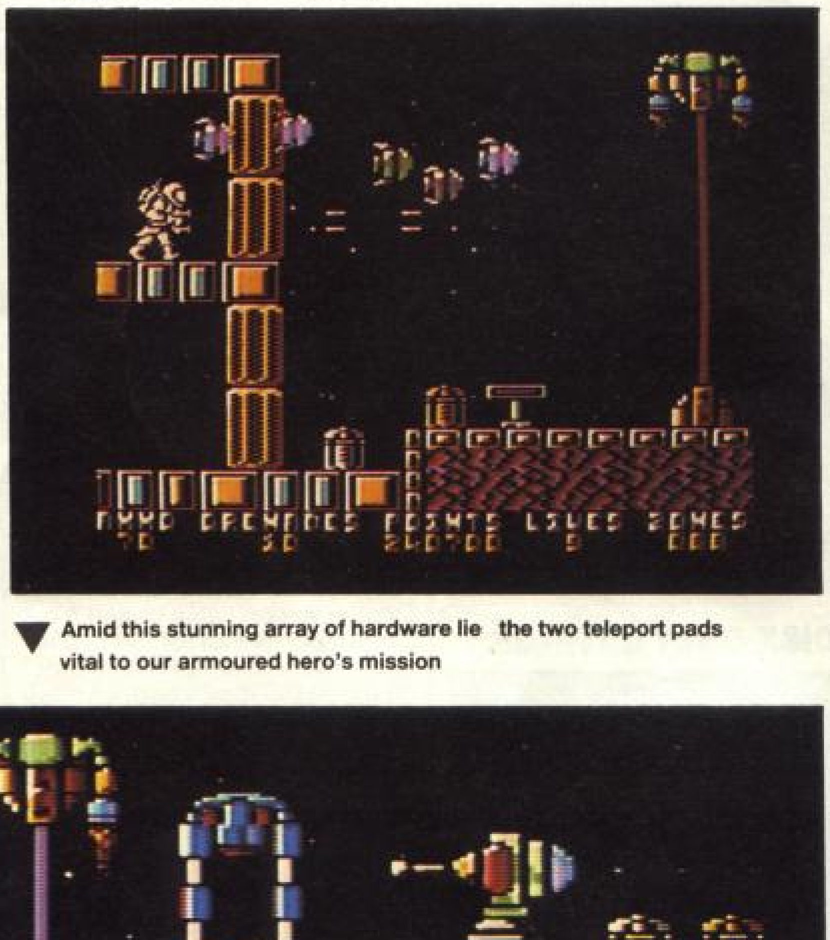




Although this offers nothing new, Exolon **is quite enjoyable and offers a fair amount of challenge for those willing to persevere. Getting to the spaceship should take a lot of practice – it gets really tough on later levels, with plenty of hazards and swarms of aliens keep at bay. The backdrops and main sprites are excellent, and the sound effects match the action perfectly.** Exolon **might not be state-of-the-art, but at least it looks good and offers a challenge.**



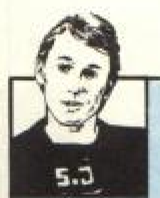
Hewson have exhumed the old flick screen Green Beret **type format and given it an airing with this insipid and tedious exploration/shoot 'em up game. I can't see anyone managing to get through all 125 screens, not without months of practice, and there just isn't enough in it to deserve that sort of perseverence. The action or graphics hardly vary from level to level and the urge to see what's beyond the next screen is minimal. The graphics and sound effects are great – but if it's action, playability and variety you want, try Hewson's other release this month.**



Resplendent in his stunning exo-skeleton, the humanoid battles against a horde of deadly flying aliens



Amid this stunning array of hardware lie the two teleport pads vital to our armoured hero's mission



The style of graphics in Exolon **is very reminiscent of the other Hewson game this month,** Zynaps**. They're quite pleasant, and have a strange storybook quality about them (the animation on the main character is uncannily like something out of a Czechoslavakian cartoon!). The game plays well, but again follows** Zynaps **in that it can be frustratingly difficult at times. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it can be offputting at first. the collision detection also seems to be on the tight side, and this combined with the generous amount of aliens wobbling about means that some screens are definitely not for the faint of heart. Ardent arcade adventurers may well find a rather decent challenge in** Exolon.

PRESENTATION 83%
A professional high-score table and options screen.

GRAPHICS 82%
Very pretty backdrops and superbly animated main character.

SOUND 61%
Great sound effects, but the title tune is naff.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Straightforward, mildly addictive blasting action.

LASTABILITY 51%
Negotiating the 125 screens is a tough job, but the little reward offered means that the action eventually palls.

OVERALL 64%
A competent shoot 'em up which lacks variety.



ACE 2
PILOT ONE
PLANES 03
SCORE
0000000
TAKE OFF
ARM AIRCRAFT
ACE 2
AIRCRAFT WEAPONS SELECTION
6×HEAT AIR-AIR
4×RADAR AIR-AIR
0×AIR-SHIP
PREPARE FOR TAKE OFF
PILOT TWO
PLANES 03
SCORE
0000000
High speed one or two pilot action.
Computer opponent has advanced artificial intelligence at 20 skill levels.
Comprehensive options.
PILOT ONE
PLANES 03
SCORE
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PILOT TWO
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SCORE
0000000
Air-air and air-ground combat.
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Equipped with two aircraft types and a variety of modern missiles.
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ACE 2
THE ULTIMATE
HEAD TO HEAD
CONFLICT

THE MAN WHO WON/LOST THE MAN WHO LOST/WON



Gen. MacArthur



Adm.Yamamoto

NOW YOU CAN CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY

The battle for Guadalcanal has been called the most decisive single action of the war in the Pacific.

More significant, even, than Pearl Harbor.

The battle lasted six months. It took the combat skills, the courage and eventually the lives of thousands of dedicated fighting men, both American and Japanese, to bring it to a conclusion.

The battle for Guadalcanal is unquestionably the finest war strategy game to date.

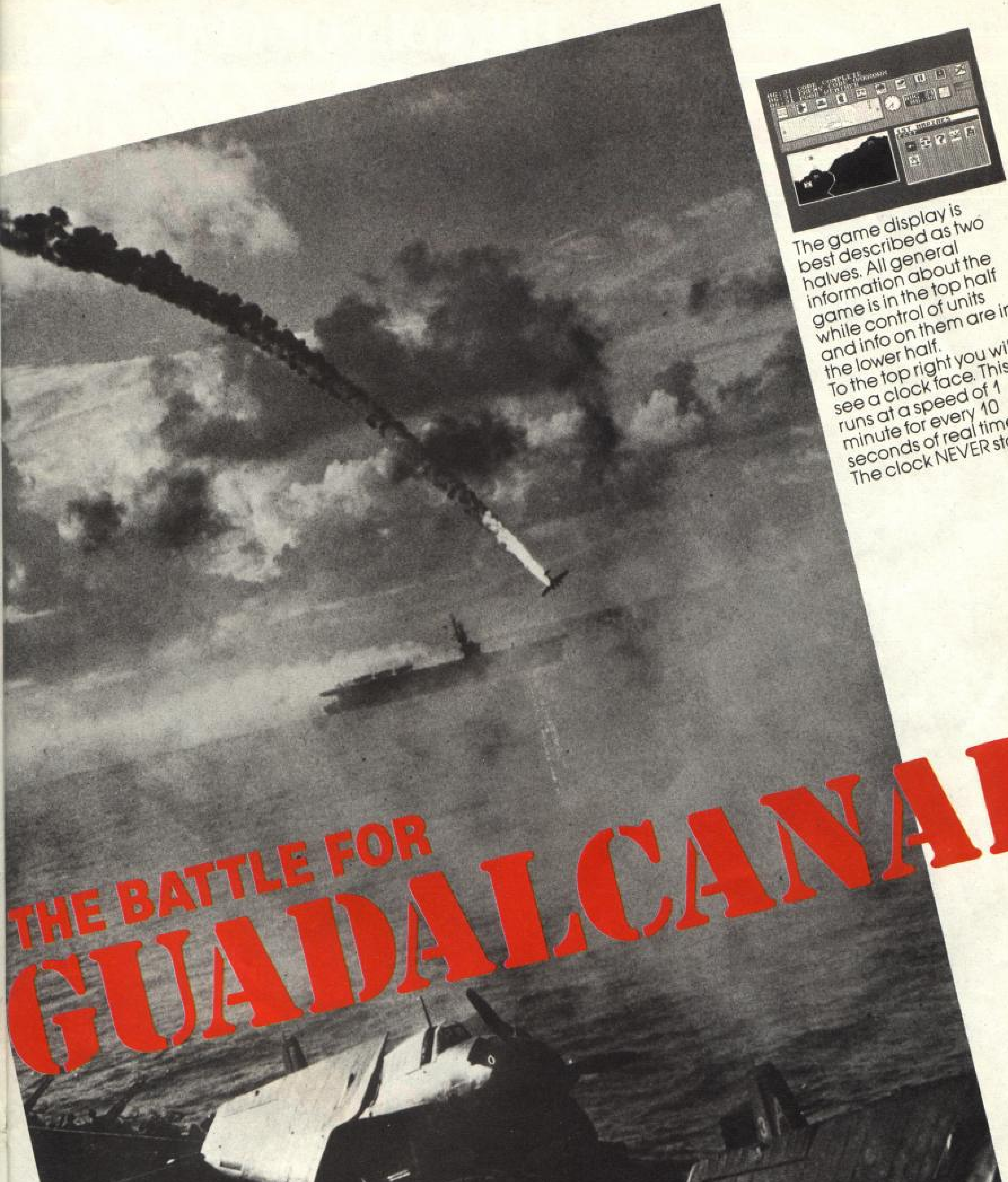
It is perhaps the first game to give you a true indication of the awesome responsibility of the battle commander.

Now you can re-fight the battle for Guadalcanal.

You can re-think the tactics. You can re-deploy the resources.

You can re-live the battle.

In effect, you can change the course of history.



The game display is best described as two halves. All general information about the game is in the top half while control of units and info on them are in the lower half. To the top right you will see a clock face. This runs at a speed of 1 minute for every 10 seconds of real time. The clock NEVER stops.

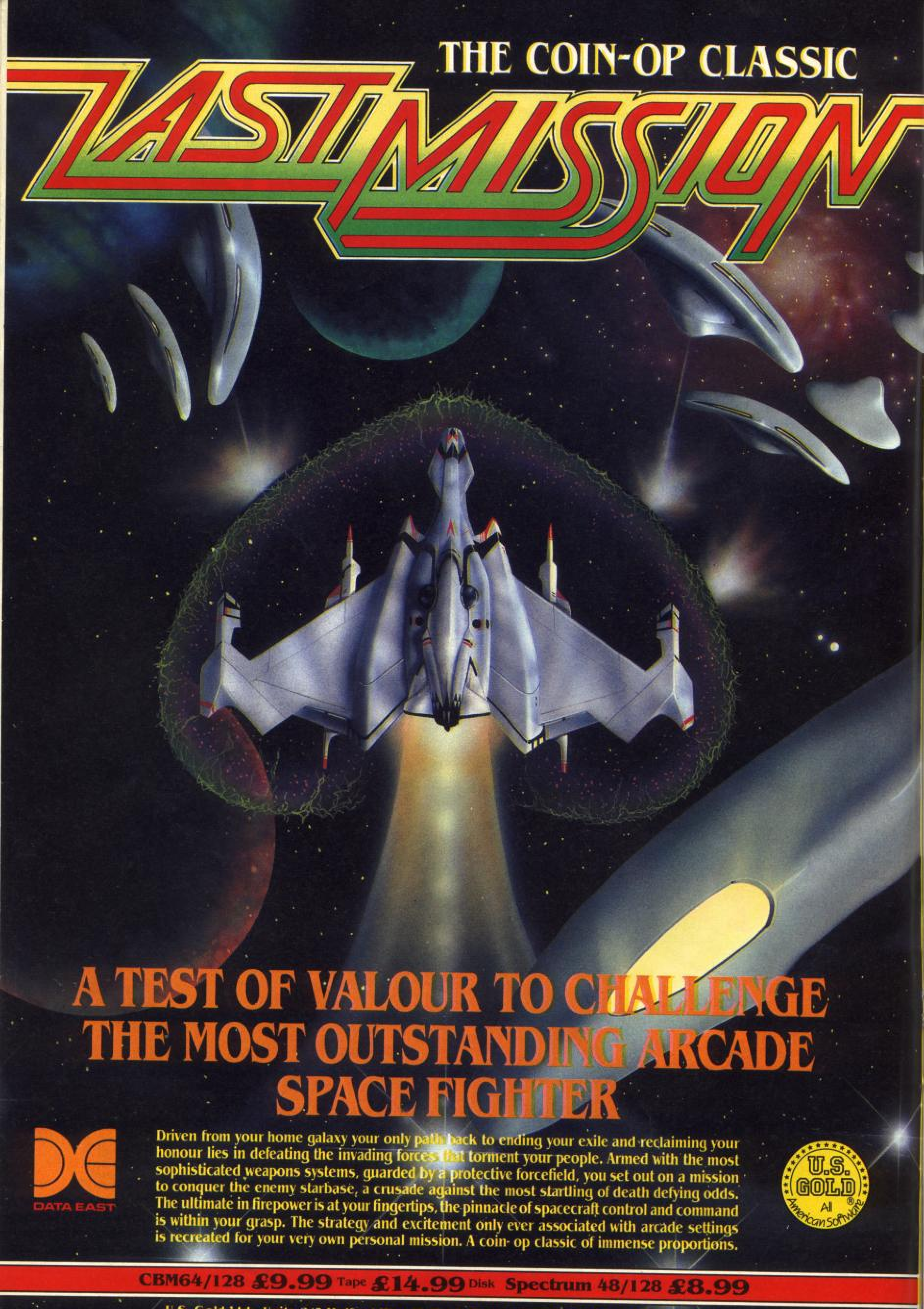
THE BATTLE FOR GUADALCANAL

ACTIVISION®
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE

Commodore 64/128 cassette & Disc ZX Spectrum 48k/128k/+
Amstrad CPC cassette & Disc (All cassettes £9.99 and discs £14.99)

Mail order: Activision (UK) Ltd, Units 3 & 4 Finedone Road Industrial Estate, Wellingborough, Northampton NN8 4SR

Computer software program – Guadalcanal – designed by Ian Bird, developed in collaboration with Alan Steel


THE COIN-OP CLASSIC
LAST MISSION
A TEST OF VALOUR TO CHALLENGE THE MOST OUTSTANDING ARCADE SPACE FIGHTER
DATA EAST
Driven from your home galaxy your only path back to ending your exile and reclaiming your honour lies in defeating the invading forces that torment your people. Armed with the most sophisticated weapons systems, guarded by a protective forcefield, you set out on a mission to conquer the enemy starbase, a crusade against the most startling of death defying odds. The ultimate in firepower is at your fingertips, the pinnacle of spacecraft control and command is within your grasp. The strategy and excitement only ever associated with arcade settings is recreated for your very own personal mission. A coin- op classic of immense proportions.
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ZZAP! RRAP

For a while back there, it began to look as though summer had arrived, but before the runner beans touched home base, whomp! and the autumn set in. Actually November arrived before August had started . . . but then, I've always argued we should move Ludlow to a nice quiet island in the Bahamas. However, since I'm still stuck here in the cold, grey rain of summer, it's only your letters that bring a glow to my life (how's that for sycophancy – LMLWD . . . look it up).

Onto the ZZAP! Rrap then, and we kick off with Letter of the Month, which goes, together with the £30 worth of software, to a person who exhibits great common sense . . .

ZZAP! ISN'T PERFECT, BUT . . .

Dear Lloyd ole fella me lad,
I have a question. Why do people buy ZZAP!? If you were to take your letters pages seriously, you would think that people's main reason for buying it is to enable them to moan about:

1. The lack of reviews
2. The length of reviews
3. Lack of colour shots in reviews
4. Too many shots in reviews
5. Etc etc.

Does this mean that the great British public likes nothing better than a good moan?

I find some comments on your letters pages right gems. As one of your more aged readers (excuse me while I turn off my hearing aid), I thought I should give a little advice to your readers.

I start by asking another question – do you, the reader, think ZZAP! perfect in every detail?

I think most mortal folk (from Margate to Ayrshire) would agree that if they were the brain behind ZZAP! (I assume there are some somewhere in the Newsfield offices), they would do something different to the present regime. This is only to be expected, we would all want something slightly different to one another. It's therefore clear that no magazine, be it ZZAP!, in the computer field or any other in other fields, can ever hope to please all of the people all of the time. You can only listen to comment and criticism and change with the times like any other magazine. If you do not listen to what your customers say about you, then you are certain to lose readers and fold up.

The proof that you listen and adapt your magazine is in your willingness to publish letters of all types and seek views in questionnaires. Anyone who has bought your mag for any length of time will know you have dropped some features, tried new ones, brought back old ones etc. You obviously listen and take heed of comment.

What the average punter should do before buying any article is decide what they expect to get out of it and then look to see what is available within their price range.

Those of us who buy ZZAP! like games and don't want pages of listings, in-depth analysis of the sex life of a SID chip, or detailed coverage of computers other than the CBM 64. Having bought ZZAP! we can either be guided by, or ignore your reviewers' comments. We learn by ours and their mistakes.

From a personal point of view, I don't think ZZAP! is perfect. I don't read Tamara/Terminal and pay little attention to the adverts. I do not, however, object to them being in the mag if a high proportion of other readers want them there. I will buy ZZAP! as long as there are lots of pages of reviews (which does of course depend on the amount of games released that month).

Okay, I forgot something – if I start finding your reviewers' tastes are so weird that I can't use them as a guideline, I'll stop subscribing. So far I've roughly been in agreement with them. The only game I really disagreed on was *Zoids* – it's awful. Having said that, I know others thought it great – that's life!

Now for one more go at *The Sentinel* . . .

Jim Ruby, Kent

It's real hard being perfect, in fact I've heard it said that it's impossible to be perfectly good, whereas being perfectly bad is child's play. It's out of the struggle to be perfect that exciting things emerge, and who knows, one might even become halfway good in the process. For further information on the subject, I'm shortly publishing a slim volume entitled Lloyd Mangram and Perfectionism through Zen and the Art of the I Ching – *it'll be a great seller . . .*

But to keep you company in the meantime, your Letter of the Month prize will be sent as soon as you let the appropriate authorities know what software you would like.

LM

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ZZAP! RRAP

POSTING THE GAME

Dear Lloyd,
I've noticed that recently more software houses are bringing out useless software that relies more on advertising than the game itself. Perhaps they think that if they put posters of games in magazines and grab people's attention, the public will buy the games purely because the poster looks good.

On another note, what the hell do you think you're doing. *Werner* – 10 percent Overall. Ha! You should get some new reviewers!! Okay, so the graphics are 'cute', but 10 percent is ridiculous. It should be about 4 percent. It is a pointless, useless and overpriced game. I wouldn't buy it for 20p let alone £9.95. Come on Ariolasoft, get your act together.

Also, what happened to the Sizzlers and Gold Medals. Since the Christmas Edition there have been only 11 Sizzlers and one Gold Medal. Why haven't games such as *Avenger* (86 percent), *Ranarama* (87), *Lightforce* (87), *Firetrack* (88), *Nosferatu The Vampyre* (88), *Flash Gordon* (89), *Super Huey II* (89) and others at 85 percent, got Sizzlers. Surely this is wrong? If a game has to get 90 percent or over to become a Sizzler then how much does a game have to get in order to achieve Gold Medal status!?

On to piracy. All those people who write in saying something like 'I'm a pirate and I'm proud of it', are total jerks. A lot of these 'proud' criminals sign their letters A N Onymous, or something like that. If they're so proud, why don't they sign their names?

A note to all the pirates out there – how do you expect software houses to turn out good software if they don't make any money from it because a few hundred people buy it but a few thousand copy it? If you want good software, stop pirating it, and then maybe software houses will be bothered to spend more time and effort in making decent games.

I think that the sample tape in the June issue is a brilliant idea and you should do it again sometime. 3D Maps are also a good idea but can't you put them on top of advertisements to save us having to cut up the important parts of our beloved ZZAP!? However, having said that, couldn't it be photocopied? Two different ways of obtaining it easily. Other than that, your mag is excellent. Have you ever thought about collecting all the POKEs, tips, hints, cheats, maps ever, and forming one big tips magazine. You could call it 'The Best of ZZAP! 64 Tips'. Think about it, eh?

J D Preou, Essex

No, come on now, this business has always produced poor games on top of excellent advertising, but some damned good ones too! I don't see any real increase in this egregious behaviour, although the idea of magazines printing special (even ginormously ordinary page-sized) posters in the centre, complete with their logo, when in fact they're just a software house's artwork for a game – another sort of ad – is a bit tacky; and that does seem to be on the increase.

The trouble with giving 85-89 percent games Sizzler status when there are none over 90 percent is that we'll get loads of letters then saying such-and-such got 86 percent last month and was the only Sizzler, when this month with four Sizzlers, such-and-such II wasn't a Sizzler and it got 89 percent. Can't win that one.

The 3-D map did seem popular, but when the editorial content like that is planned, it isn't always known where the ads are going, so photocopying would seem the best option. A Tips book? Why not? Perhaps Julian will look into the matter . . .

LM

BETTER BY FAR

Dear Lloyd,
Like most readers I think ZZAP! is brill. My friend who has a Spectrum said that Spectrum mags sell better than ZZAP! I had a very long talk with him saying that ZZAP! is just the best, but he still thinks the same. So can you tell me if ZZAP! is the best selling mag in the UK.

S M Stratford, Scotland

I presume you mean, is ZZAP! the best selling computer mag in Britain? Well no, it's not. It is the best selling magazine devoted to the CBM64 by quite a stretch, but there are a couple of Spectrum magazines that sell more copies every month, and one of them, our sister title CRASH actually, is the best selling computer magazine in Britain. ZZAP!'s sales are rising every month however – so who knows? . . . maybe soon . . .

LM

UNENDUROBLE

Dear Lloyd,
I was reading through Issue 27 and was amazed at the stupidity of the *Enduro Racer* review.

Enduro Racer was a classic in the arcades. The review given was to put it bluntly, crap. I quote from one reviewer 'Has your computer got 16-bit multi-tasking slave processors, a 32-bit internal processor and several thousand colours?'

Course it bloody hasn't it's only a CBM 64 not an entire arcade. How can you possibly compare the arcade machine to a computer? It's like comparing a hand-held Space Invader game to an Atari ST.

It's not the first time ZZAP! has done this, cast your minds back to the reviews of *Commando*, *Paperboy* and *Space Harrier* – all very good games in their own right and they sold well.

If ZZAP! keeps on reviewing games like it is presently, there'll be no point reviewing computer games at all.

Now Andrew Braybrook's Diary. I was appalled to see in the final column of Mental Procreation that just as the 64 versus Spectrum argument ends, Braybrook decides on an Amiga versus ST one. That was bad enough, but to also include factual inaccuracies was downright ridiculous. I quote 'The only smooth scrolling possible will be limited in colour, vertical only on a small area or very slow. *Gold Runner* is a fast, smooth, colourful, large-area, vertical scroll. *Metrocross* is a fast, smooth, colourful, large and horizontal scroll.

Julian Rignall has often condemned the computer argument (eg defending himself by saying the Spectrum 128 is a good machine in CRASH), and while he, and people like him, are about we can all look forward to the end of pointless 'my computer is better than yours' arguments.

Andrew Johnson, Northampton

I think on the whole I agree with you Andrew. There is no point in comparing a series of dedicated chips with a home computer. However, I think there's some validity in suggesting that a conversion is bound to fail because its original form is so complex that it's pointless converting it. Nevertheless, the comment you quote does seem to verge on the sarcastic rather than the constructive. Interestingly enough, on the Spectrum, where programmers have to work so much harder to get round the graphics, screen handling and sound and therefore tend naturally to concentrate much more on game design and gameplay, Enduro Racer was a Smash.

On the Atari ST versus Amiga front, I'm not expert enough (yet!) to pass judgement. The concensus of opinion between those I have spoken to, and who ought to know, is that the Amiga is a far superior machine – but then, it's a damned sight more expensive too.

LM

GETTING STARTED

Dear Lloyd,
A few friends and I are writing a game which we hope to sell through a software house. We would like to call ourselves something, but some of the names we've dreamed up may already exist. I have enclosed a list of the names we've thought of. Could you please find out if any of them exist. We don't want to break copyright laws by using an existing name.

And Could you tell us how we go about getting the game marketed when (and if?) it's finished. I was going to ask John Twiddy as he lives down the street from me, but I decided that I'd better not disturb him.

Here's the list: Unique, Softech or Softek, Logical or Logikal, Logic or Logik, Logica or Logika, Hexoft, Hexcellent, Adroit (means skilful or ingenious), Microsoft, Metrosoft, Ksoft (pronounced Kaysoft), Morsoft, Supersoft or Supasoft.

A Morgan, Tyne and Wear

If you're a firm – a partnership and not a Limited Liability Company – then (with some limitations on which you would require proper advice from an accountant or a solicitor) there's very little problem with using any name you like. But you would want to avoid confusion, so I should avoid Softek or Microsoft, both of which certainly do exist.

As for marketing your finished game, there's nothing more you can do than hawking it round those software houses you would best like to see selling it. You could do this by posting copies to them, but it would be better, and safer, to make an appointment and then go personally to demonstrate the game. But you must bear in mind that the major software houses have loads of hopefuls coming in with new games so their attitude is bound to be one of scepticism – you must overcome that through your enthusiasm, determination and the quality of your ideas and game.

LM

VALUE FOR MONEY

Dear Lloyd,
I really don't know what people expect from the computer industry, they're always complaining about costs. Sure, money is a worry to all of us, especially youngsters without a job, but take this recent spate of letters debating the prices of software.

I'll admit that I'm not an expert on the subject, but common sense tells me that software as innovative, complex and professional as (recently) *Wizball*, *Paradroid*, *World Games*, *Leaderboard*, *Uridium* etc cannot be produced cheaply. Not only should the costs of programming be considered, but also advertising and distribution as well, how many big glossy adverts announcing a new mega Mastertronic game have you seen?

True, ten quid is expensive, but not if consumers want to buy good high-standard software. However, ZZAP! readers will undoubtedly retaliate with 'Well Mastertronic and Firebird can produce excellent games', but can they? I don't think so; *Thrust* was an excellent game . . . for two quid, stick a ten quid price tag on it and it would have been a different story. Yes, it had superb gameplay and good music, but it only had six stages, very basic graphics, simple packaging and hardly any advertising. The announcement in the July editorial about the price of software dropping to six quid before Christmas is a welcome boost, but I guarantee a lot of people will complain even about this price.

My second point is again about costs, and is a reply to Mr Pedersen's letter in the July edition. There he was complaining about the lack of text in ZZAP! reviews, too many screen shots, the size of the screenshots and that he wanted bigger reviews, but the mag only cost a pound and is not supposed to be Encyclopedia Britannica!

In the July issue for a pound we saw, 114 pages of information containing no less than 35 full colour reviews! Ammmmazing! Each review was well balanced with text (which included the lengthy, informative, interesting and witty personal comments, Mr Pedersen!) and screen shots. The reviews were appropriately sized, considering the standard of the game being reviewed as well. Take for example *Wizball*, six beautiful screen shots, three lengthy personal comments and four columns of text! So my congratulations must be sent to all those at ZZAP! Towers who produced such a high quality piece of literature for such a small price.

So Mr Pedersen, think before you start complaining and demanding more this and more that, producing high quality goods costs money – be realistic!

Lee Walsh, Essex

I must say it's nice to hear from someone being sensible when it comes to the subject of value for money, someone who recognises that there are always commercial factors in any undertaking, financial restraints which are only broken at the peril of the producer in question. And that isn't a defence for any software company putting out poor games at high prices, because their peril is falling sales as people catch on. For what it's worth, I rather doubt that the 'midi' price range will really have any effect, or that many companies will really do it. Quite frankly, I don't see how they can afford to. And true enough, the budget houses do not advertise for the simple reason that their margins don't allow for promotional costs.

You might also consider this: ZZAP! and all other computer magazines are utterly dependent on their advertising revenue – unless you're all (every one of you) prepared to fork out at least £2.25 a month instead. If the entire industry started selling all its product at half price, the companies would have to cut their promotional budgets to shreds and as a result ZZAP!, C&VG and even CU would probably cease to exist. And in the end it wouldn't do the punter any good, because without advertising (as has been proven again and again) sales would fall (and there wouldn't be the magazines to help promote the games any more), so would profits, so would programmers' salaries, and in the end so would computer games. Amen

LM

BBS

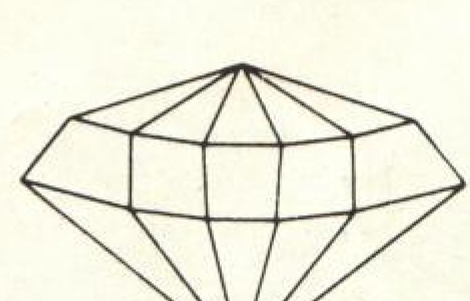
Dear ZZAP!
At the moment I and a few other friends are running a BBS System and it's doing well except for the Commodore section. Can you help, please, by placing this letter in your magazine?

K Broomfield
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V.21.V22.V.23

Consider it done!

LM

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ON OFFER

Dear Lloyd,
ZZAP! is brilliant in most ways but I do have one complaint. When I subscribed in February I was looking forward to many subscription offers, but since that time there has been one. When I received July's edition I turned to the contents pages and saw a subscription offer. I turned straight to page 106 and found an *Eagles* review, I flipped over the page and found what seemed to be a great subscription offer—until I saw nothing for which I could send off. Before I subscribed there were quite a few offers but now there seems to be none. Could you please tell me why their has been a decrease in the number of offers?
Mick Wall, Sheffield

There was a time when ZZAP! had some wonderful subs offers – in fact we did so many we exhausted the software industry's supply of decent offers! More recently there have been some administrative changes (which to be honest, always upset the apple cart for a bit), and now we're hoping to see a load more subs offers appearing. The Spectravideo Joyballs are one such.
LM

CNETLESS

Dear Lloyd,
Please, please, please, please, please, could you print the address of somewhere I can get a Compunet modem from. I know all the Cnet lingo but I can't seem to find a damn modem anywhere. Can you help?
Brett Patterson, Sheffield

Help is at hand Brett, contrary to what we told Mike Nield in the August Issue, Compunet are still supplying free modems with each one year's subscription to Compunet. Give them a ring on 01 997 2591.
LM

PUTTING THE CART BEFORE THE FORCE

Dear Lloyd,
It's quite obvious that software companies are phasing cassette-based games out. The Wiz is forever moaning about the lack of good tape-based adventure games, and who can blame him, when he can play disk-based Infocom games to his heart's content? *The Shadows of Mordor* and *He-Man* travesties only go to prove that it's almost impossible to get a good adventure/interactive fiction game out of a cassette without using long-winded, boring and in most cases, pointless multi-loads.

Other types of game have also suffered because of the limitations of the cassette; games like *Gunship*, *Championship Wrestling* and *World Class Leaderboard* are almost unrecognisable compared to their disk-based counterparts.

Isn't it about time software companies release games on cartridge? Apart from cutting down piracy quite considerably, there would be virtually no loading problems, greater loading speed, increased capabilities and more satisfied gamers.

Casual gamers like myself (honest I could give up whenever I wanted), are never going to get a disk-drive (although I've tried conning my dad into one) so cartridges are our only hope. Companies like US Gold, Infocom and Magnetic Scrolls should seriously consider cartridges, because US Gold hardly ever release a cassette game half as good as its disk counterpart, and Infocom and Magnetic Scrolls are missing out on a great chunk of the British games market by only releasing disks.

I hope some software companies read this letter, Lloyd, and take some action in clearing up the British software mess caused by cassettes.
James Campbell, Humberside

I'm really no expert on this, but from what I've understood, the real problem with cartridges is their manufacturing cost, which prohibits software houses, even the bigger groups, from using them freely for sales. In the case of Mattel or Sega, you're looking at giant corporations with years of investment in cartridges behind them. These are then sold in densely populated market areas, and, most importantly, the people who control the process of programming the cartridges, even for third-party software.

Some years ago, Sinclair tried cartridge loading for the Spectrum, and it was no great success. I suspect that many people today would look upon them with suspicion in the light of Sinclair's failure. However, I'd be delighted to hear from some voices within the industry on this subject.
LM

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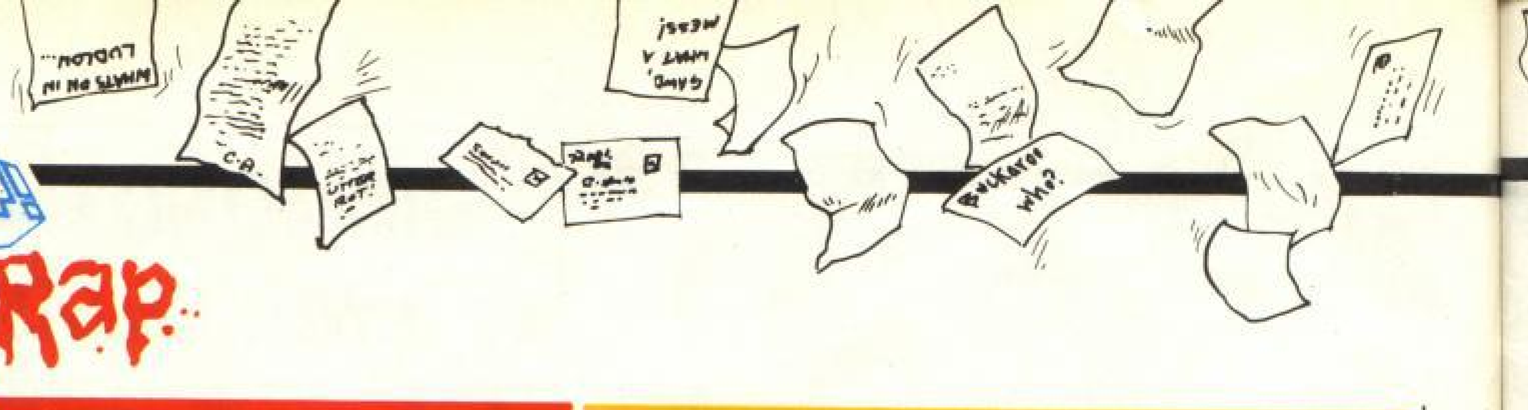
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DIAMOND



A MULTI-LOAD OF POINTS

Dear Lloyd,

The Commodore Show

I was disappointed to see ZZAP! didn't attend as I've spent a lot of time talking to Gary and Richard in the past. What with the lack of new software, I talked to the two other magazines there. *Commodore User*'s Eugene Lacey was nice and mentioned that they hoped to stop the slagging between ZZAP! and *CU*. I also had a good long chat with Mark Patterson who was very friendly and interesting to talk to. But you may be interested to hear that *C&VG* had some interesting things to say about ZZAP! First they said that ZZAP! should have been there supporting the Commodore industry (coming from them that's hypocritical as it's their first Commodore Show) then ZZAP!'s artwork, which they claimed was going downhill, and suggested a change of artist.

Want to hear more? They mentioned reviewing style, layout and expressed a general dislike of the mag and team in general. It's interesting to note that these statements were said to me and not in print to you. However, try answering this one; why does *C&VG* use comic strip characters to answer their letters. I leave it to you to do what you will.

Reviews

Your reviews have improved with more colour and better screen shots, but I feel that the Sizzler rating has been over-used, and in some cases, under-used. First *Wizball*; come on, a Sizzler? Just look at your review – lowest mark 81 percent, Overall 96 percent; reviewers comments, and I quote, '*Wizball* is the finest release this year . . . ' Julian. '*Wizball* is simply brilliant . . . ' Gary (when does he like a game, every decade!). 'Miss this and you're missing the best program this year . . . ' Steve. By all this evidence a year ago this would have been a Gold Medal. But as it isn't I can only assume, as this is the best program of the year, that the Gold Medal doesn't exist any more.

Second, *Delta*; wow, Gary liked that didn't he? He says that learning opposition patterns and flying in a straight line is boring, and then next issue says that *Nemesis* 'has a lot to offer in the playability stakes.' Hey! Wait a minute! I've played that . . . Yes! it scrolls in a straight line and you learn predictable alien patterns – funny, I thought Gary didn't like that. Steve says that *Delta* has predictable gameplay and then says that *Nemesis* is fast and furious and should prove enough of a challenge even to hardened *Nemesis* fans. Fact: a 'hardened' *Nemesis* fan of mine completed the 64 version on his third go, and yet was still playing *Delta* weeks later. Rating *Nemesis* as you have is unfair to *Delta*, but rating *Delta* as you have is really stupid. Do you really still think *Sanxion* is better? According to your review it is, I can appreciate that as time progresses software should theoretically improve and ratings change accordingly but, how can you rate two similar games so differently?

Conversion Tie-Ins.

I'm getting tired of hearing that there are too many conversions. If you want a conversion buy it, if not, don't. But don't try to tell me that everyone is fed up with conversions, because when they appear people buy them and that's a fact. If everyone were so worried that conversions are ruining all the chances for original software then no-one would buy them, would they? But they do, so the problem can't be that bad.

Look at the benefits of arcade conversion. What with under-eighteen bans on some arcades, and the fact that for a tenner unlimited plays can be had at home, then surely conversions can do some good.

Piracy

Let's finish this here and now – pirates are prats. Why? Because they're breaking the law. 'Software is too expensive' – ever heard of budget games? Saving up? – 'but why should I when I can get it for nothing?' – because buying originals isn't against the law, and can help produce better software from the money you spend. Besides when we all own Amigas, will all software be pirated because Amiga software is twice the price of 64 stuff?

Finally some other points:

Bring back the challenge with Steve Jarratt as champion. Have a regular arcade section. Have more reviews and previews. Andrew Braybrook is really nice I met him at Chelmsford Boots. Please read my letter and keep up the good work because you're still the best 64 mag.

Sean York, Chelmsford

It's true ZZAP! didn't turn up at the last Commodore Show – at least, not with a stand, Julian, Steve, Ciarán and Gary were there as visitors – it was a decision taken with all due consideration, because it always seems to fall at an awkward time for the magazine's print schedule. As for C&VG, *I thought they didn't like any other mag except their own, not even their sister* Commodore User . . .

On the reviews, it was Steve who said you would be missing the best program of the year in Wizball, *not the team as a whole, and the game got 96 percent – usually a Gold Medal has been awarded at 97%, so there is some logic there! But with* Delta *you have my entire sympathy (perhaps that's why they won't let me review many games?). I liked the game, but the team as a whole decided on the rating, and that's the beauty of ZZAP!'s democratic reviewing system. As for the death of the Gold Medal, what about last month's* Head Over Heels, *or indeed* California Games *in this very issue.*

LM

DEMO TAPE CENSORED

Dear Lloyd,

Recently I purchased, my first ZZAP! 64 from the local store. I got it because *Commodore User* readers keep abusing you and making fun of you, so I wanted to really see how bad you were.

Here's what I think. Your mag is quite short and most is wasted on ads. You don't have any arcade reviews in your mag. I would also like to see you preview some games and make your reviews a bit longer. In your June issue I found out that it should contain a demonstration tape. The bad news was that mine was missing. I asked the shopkeeper and the reply was unbelievable!! 'The Company that we get our magazines from do not want to sell the tape with it as it was not licensed to, and that it did not want to risk the censoring authorities following it.' I think what the guy said was a load of rubbish. Why should a magazine want to sell banned stuff?

I really like your mag because the Tips and POKEs section is long and has POKEs for recent games. I would like to congratulate you on such a good mag and hope you take my letter into consideration. I don't think you do get readers letters from this part of the world and especially buying your mag for £3.50.

Wassim Murtad, Abu Dhabi

For that price you certainly should have got the demo tape Wassim. I can't speak for the 'censoring authorities' and their views of what is saleable and what is not, but I assure you the tape has been included with the issue everywhere else.

LM

LS ● PENPALS ● PE

Jonathan Paul Mole (aged 13) of 12 Streatham Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 2AA, wants a penpal. Your gender is irrelevant, as long as you own a C64 or C16.

Andrew Dodd of 37 Ryder Crescent, Hillside, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 3AE would like a penpal. Once again there is no hint of sex discrimination, but C64 owners who use tape software are preferred.

Keith Leslie of 15 Aghamore Park, Strathfoyle, Londonderry, Northern Ireland, BT47 1XF would like to write to 64 owners of any age from any part of the world.

Miss H Passey, who hails from 70 Kimberley Road, Penylan, Cardiff, CF4 5DL, claims to be a wally and would like a penfriend. She promises faithfully to reply to all letters.

Michael Underhill of Mannings Farm, Ashill, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 3NL is 16 years old and wants a Commodore-owning penpal.

John Harris, 30 Cavalier Way, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4SE who's 14 would like to write to someone from any part of the world. Commodore owners who share John's interest in Moonlighting would be preferred.

PLAY BY MAIL

Dear Lloyd,
Concerning the subject of Play By Mail games, I seriously think that you should consider devoting one page to this, explaining the basics and reviewing some of the games available in your magazine. I am interested in PBM and buy CRASH (I don't own a Spectrum) just to look at their three PBM pages. I've sent off for a starter pack in the game *Kick About*, a football PBM which sounds very good.

Paul Garton, Derby

It appears to be immensely successful in CRASH, and coming soon in ZZAP! hopefully . . .

LM

ONE-TRACKED

Dear Lloyd,
I am writing to stop people like Steven Hunter (Issue 26) from saying that Gary Penn was slagging off games like *Tomahawk* when Steven thinks they're brilliant. GP and the other reviewers are giving their own opinions, and GP gave *Tomahawk* the correct ratings in his own opinion.

At the end of Steven's letter he said that more letters in the Rrap section were junk, but I think that Steven's letter was the most one-tracked piece of junk I've ever seen.

I guess that Steven will write to you saying something against me, but I don't care in the slightest. No hard feelings, Steven, but you've got to admit what you wrote was a bit stupid.

Keep up the good reviews ZZAP! it isn't your fault that Software companies aren't producing the goods.

Can we have more previews please.

Daniel Willetts, W Midlands

In his defence, Steven was pointing out that Gary might have disqualified himself on the grounds that he said he didn't particularly like flight sims, therefore any ratings he gave would be based on that bias and not necessarily on the game's own merits.

LM

A CHALLENGE

Dear Lloyd,
I would like to know what a lot of the readers are on about when they say that they should be allowed to review the games, and that all your reviewers are hopeless. Because it seems to me that we do get a chance to give credit to a good game and vice-versa for a bad game, by way of the Readers' Charts and Readers' Awards.

I would also like to thank you for the great demo tape in the June Edition, it was well worth the extra money, and I am really looking forward to the next one which I hope will be appearing soon.

Could you please tell me whether the ZZAP! Challenge will ever be reappearing as I, and I'm sure many other readers, really enjoyed that article.

Darren J Perry, Birmingham

The reviewers are all a bit hopeless in most things (like keeping the office tidy), but they're pretty good when it comes to games, and ZZAP!'s record over the years for spotting excellent and poor product is second to none.

Another demo cassette will come your way before too long, although no date's set as yet. And as for the return of the ZZAP! Challenge – watch out for details next issue!

LM

Never forget, Dear reader, that without your lovely, luminous and entirely literary epistles, I'd be out of a job, and at my time of life that would be cruel (who needs a professional school leaver?). So, if you've anything to say in reply to my answers, to printed letters, about the software business, games, computers, needlework or the I Ching (hexagrams one through 46 inclusive), write to the usual address, LLOYD MANGRAM, ZZAP! RRAP, BO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB. But please don't include stamped addressed envelopes for personal replies because I just don't don't have the time (or the desk space)!

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JAPAN has a word for the



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HOGAN'S ALLEY Use your Zapper light gun to shoot the gangsters.

DUCK HUNT There's a duck in the air! You've only got three shots to bag this duck. And if you miss, even your dog laughs at you in this fast-action Zapper Gun game.

GYROMITE You've got to keep R.O.B.'s gyroscope spinning to help a mad scientist de-activate the dynamite in his laboratory in order to play this action-packed game!

GOLF Choose your clubs. Control your swings. Select the angle of every shot. It's Nintendo GOLF and there's not a video golf game on par with it anywhere!

For the first time in the UK direct from Japan comes Nintendo, the home entertainment system with genuine arcade-quality graphics. Nintendo make 2 out of 3 of all the world's coin-op arcade machines, so they know what they're doing. And already, in Japan 9½ million homes have a Nintendo home entertainment system.

Now you can enjoy the amazing 52 colour 3-D graphics of Nintendo. (On most home computers, you've been lucky to get 16 colours until now!) Nintendo's superb graphics give the games a convincing true 3-D feel with actual shadows which add depth to the characters.

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Never before has there been a video gun of this calibre. The astonishing light sensitive Zapper Gun lets you shoot moving targets with pinpoint accuracy from up to 16 feet! If you think you're a sharp shooter the Zapper Gun will test your skill to the full.

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Nintendo is available from the stockists featured. If you have any questions or have difficulty obtaining the product, write to HiTech Electronic Services Ltd., Unit 2B, 200 Rickmansworth Road, Watford WD1 7JS. Or 'phone: 09232 41811.



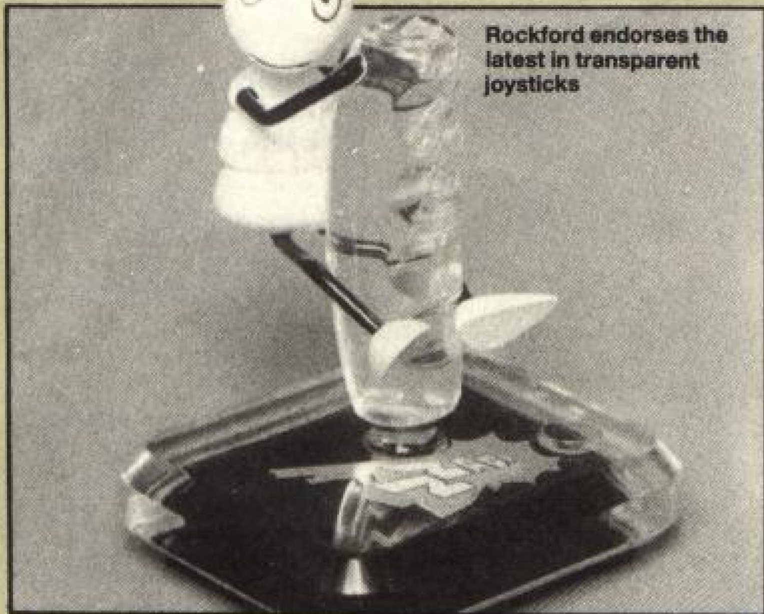
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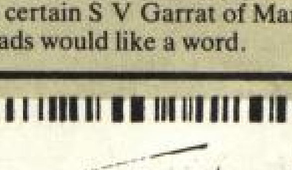
WHAT'S New



Rockford endorses the latest in transparent joysticks

This cute and cuddly little Rockford arrived in our offices quite recently, attached to his very own designer joystick. The accompanying letter came from a certain S V Garrat of Manchester. Give us a ring S V, the ZZAP! lads would like a word.

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SENSIBLE MOVE



► Matthew Tims of Outlaw Productions, flanked by Sensible Software's Jonathan 'Jops' Hare (left) and Christopher 'Crix' Yates

Those 'far-out long-haired freaky and weird' Sensible Software programmers, Cuddly Crix and Jovial Jops, have signed to Palace Software's new label, Outlaw Productions, for an undisclosed amount. Having undergone some strenuous training, they're soon to return to the first division with their *Shoot 'em up Construction Kit* – an easy-to-use, 'no programming experience required' DIY utility which allows you to write the sort of games that you would normally have to pay an arm and a leg for.

Available sometime this Autumn, *SEUCK* promises to be of major interest to blasting fans with the urge to design their own games.

NOT A PENNY MORE, NOT A PENNY LESS

With the highly publicised hoo-ha over Jeffrey Archer's recent acquittal in court still in everyone's mind, what better time is there to release the official game of his first novel and best-selling blockbuster, *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less*.

WHOOPS, APOLOGIES!

Due to circumstances beyond our control (Steve had one to many orange juices at lunch time), last month's Incentive Driller Thriller competition had a closing date of 30th July. This should actually have read 10th September, as a month isn't very long to program a technological masterpiece, is it? Anyway, you still have some time left to add those all-important finishing touches and send your completed entry to ZZAP! DRILLER COMPETITION, INCENTIVE SOFTWARE, 2 Minerva House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire RG7 4QW.

WHOOPS, APOLOGIES II – THE SEQUEL

In the *Shadows of Mordor* competition, we failed to mention by whom the hand-painted miniatures were being hand painted. Many apologies to the person in question, a certain Martin Wright (further enquiries should be made via Melbourne House).

FIN CLUB

Lovers of Piranha software will be having a whale of a time thanks to the company's soon to be announced 'Fin Club'. Information on this august body will be announced at the PCW show, and will be included in the packaging of the company's forthcoming games, *Judge Death*, *Yogi Bear*, *Through the Trap Door* and *Flunky*.

For a yearly fee of approximately £1.60, club members will receive a Piranha Pen, Badge, Club Card and Posters, along with a quarterly newsletter from 'auntie' Helen Holland . . . sounds a bit fishy, eh!

TEN THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT MARK CALE!

Here it is folks, a new ZZAP! feature where we intend to blow the lid on those whacky personalities in the world of the C64. This week we unearth the dirt on System 3's jet-setting managing director, Mark 'Magnum' Cale.

Computer Whizz Kid Mark Cale has cut quite a swathe in the computer industry over the last four years, but despite being a face familiar to many, Mark's private life has been a secret known only to few. So here's an exclusive peek into the hectic life of System 3 supremo, Mark Cale.

● **ORIGINALLY from a humble barrow boy background, Mark's first big break into the software world came with a system programming course he and two of mates attended out of boredom.**

● MARK ONLY HAS ONE pet, a dog called Apollo (named after the Dobermann from Magnum). Quite a Magnum fan, Mark has recently bought a red Ferarri Mondial – but won't be able to use it for few months after a recent driving ban for speeding.

● **DESPITE WORKING out at least once a week, the good life has taken its toll on Mark's waistline – he currently tips the scales at a portly 13.5 STONES!**

● EVEN THOUGH he now lives in a world far removed from his 'east end' beginnings, Mark's eating habits are still firmly rooted in his past. Cale's favourite midday snack is a whole greasy chicken . . . skin, bones and all!

● **MANY FAMOUS PROGRAMMERS have used System 3 as a launching pad on to greater things. These include *Dropzone* author Archer Maclean and *Wizball* Wonders Sensible Software**

● A HUNKY SIX FOOTER, Mark has never had much trouble pulling the birds, his raven-haired and brown-eyed good looks have always been a hit with the ladies (despite his Arthur Daley accent). Though quite a cassanova in his earlier days, he's now settled down with Rebecca who he met in Neasden.

● **SYSTEM 3 originally hit the headlines two years ago when Cale announced the impending release of 'Twister, Mother of Harlots'. After an outcry over the raunchy name (and the even raunchier advertising), the game was hastily renamed to Twister, Mother of Charlotte.**

● AS A PROMOTION for Twister, several scantily-clad stunnas cavorted at the PCW only to be told to 'cover up' by the prudish show organisers. Despite the ban on these 'bare essentials', Mark got quite friendly with one girl from the troupe who he later dated steadily for several months.

● **BLESSED WITH a sharp dress sense and a keen feel for style, Mark buys his clothes almost exclusively from chic west-end store Coles, where many other stars are known to shop.**

● SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, the three boys formed System 3 and launched their first Mega Smash Hit *Death Star Interceptor* (co-written by Mark and partner Emerson Best). Showing great foresight, and seeing that great things were in store, Mark shrewdly 'bought out' his two partners

ZZAP! SWEEPS THE BOARDS

Our very own Julian Rignall recently escorted two lucky readers (those super POKEers Tim and Ian Fraser of Ruislip Middx) to the playtesting launch of Martech's blockbusting shoot 'em up *Mega Apocalypse* – Simon Nicol's long-awaited follow up to *Crazy Comets*.

The day's major event was a competition where readers representing a number of magazines (including C&VG, Commodore User and CCI) attempted to beat each other to the high score. After much joystick-waggling the result was a win for ZZAP!, with Ian Fraser taking the accolades. He was presented with a shield by Simon Nicol and walked off with a bundle of free Martech games.

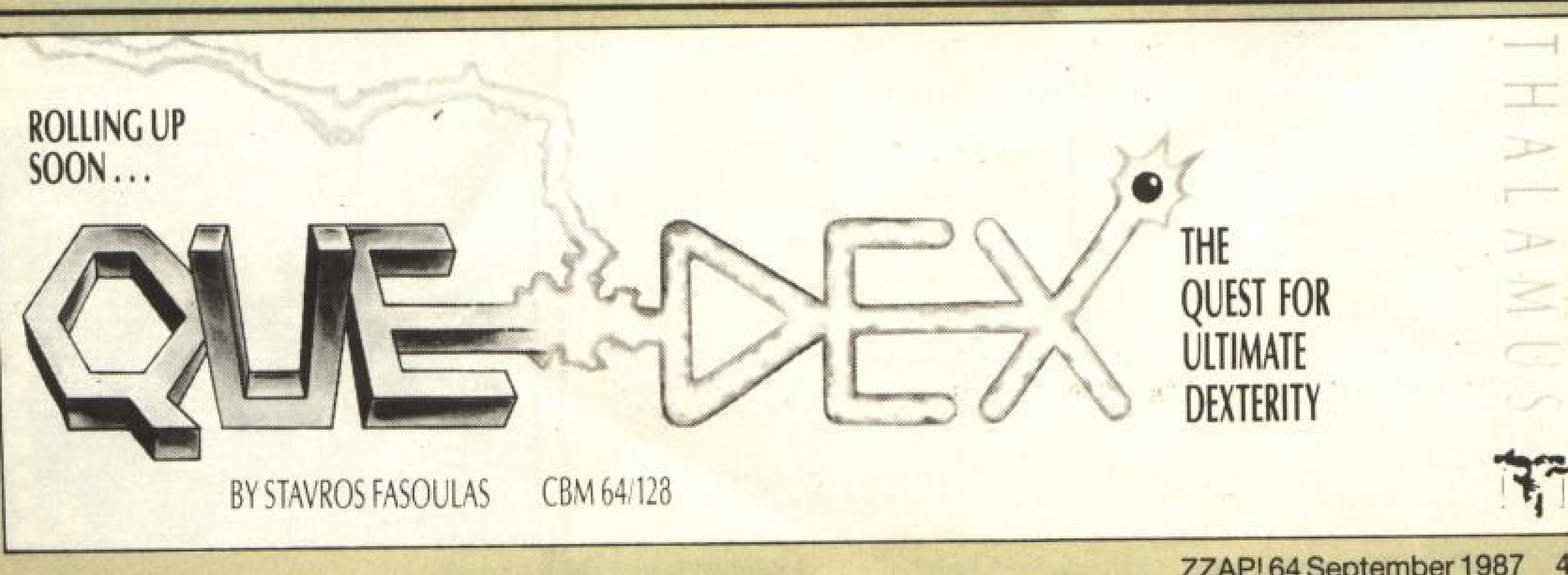
The assembled hacks were also invited to partake in a little competition, and our very own Jools proved to be too much for the so-called 'opposition', making off with the second trophy of the day. Hard luck, fellas.



► Programmer Simon Nicol (left), presents Ian Fraser with the Mega-Apocalypse trophy

GO FOR IT!

US Gold have announced a new spin-off label, **GO**, another venture which is due to launched at this year's PCW show. The grapevine suggests that this new label will release 'spectacular full-priced new games' – however, little else is known at the time of going to press . . . we'll keep you posted.



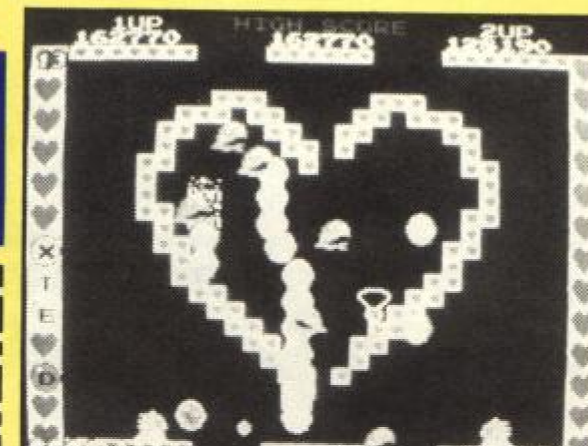
ZZAP! COMP

FIREBIRD

WIN YOUR VERY OWN

BUBBLE BOBBLE ARCADE MACHINE

As a taster for the impending release of Firebird's latest arcade conversion, *Bubble Bobble*, Firebird software are offering a first prize of a Bubble Bobble arcade machine (approximate value – £1,000!) to the winner of this great competition.

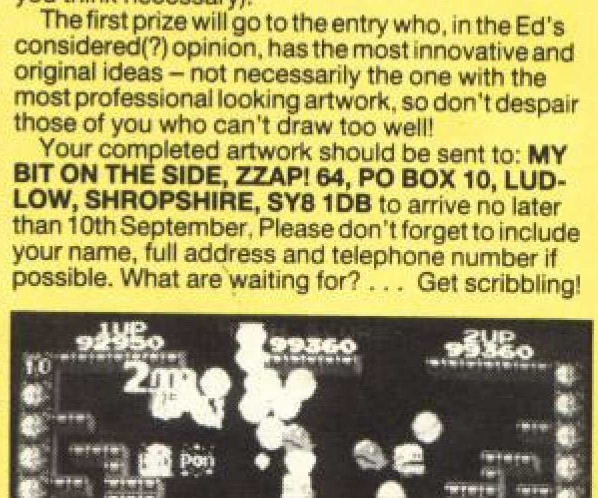


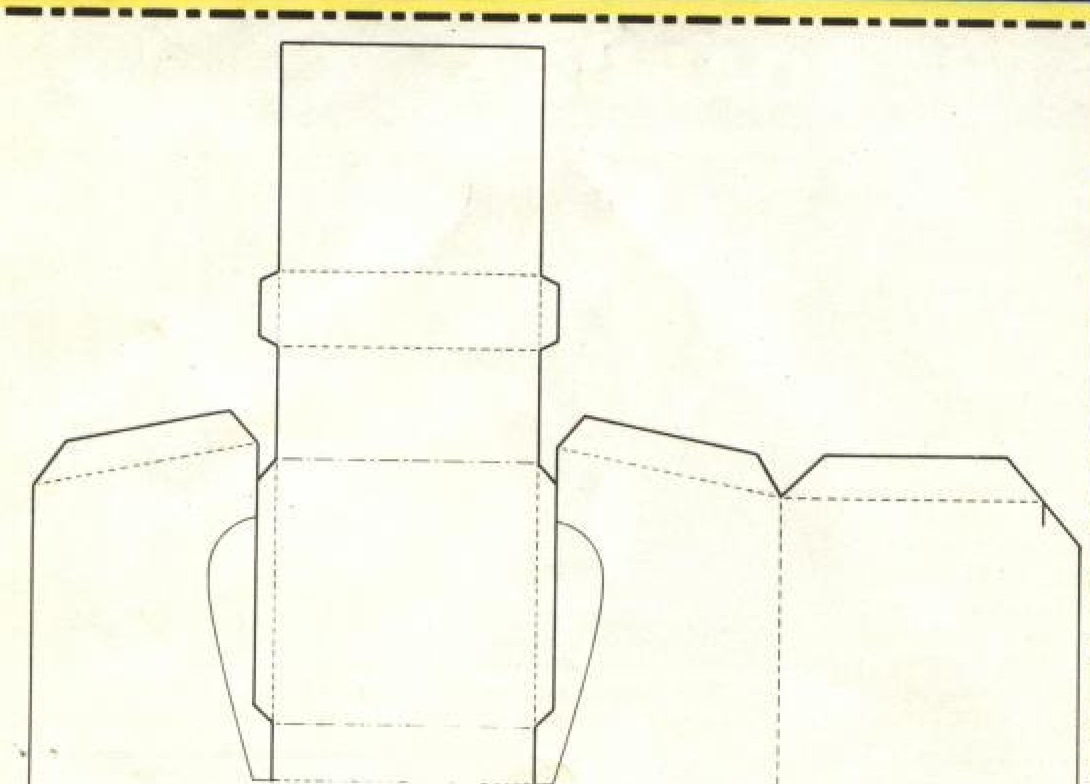
The comp is also being run in our sister mag, CRASH, so you're up against a bit of competition (Let's make it a ZZAP! winner, eh folks?). Even the runners up are well catered for, as Firebird are also offering 25 copies of the game as consolation prizes.

All you have to do to have this fine, upstanding machine in your bedroom (front room, attic etc), is to study the plan of an arcade console below, and design the exterior panel artwork for a Bubble Bobble machine as it might appear in an arcade (use the drawing as a guide and blow it up to whatever size you think necessary).

The first prize will go to the entry who, in the Ed's considered(?) opinion, has the most innovative and original ideas – not necessarily the one with the most professional looking artwork, so don't despair those of you who can't draw too well!

Your completed artwork should be sent to: **MY BIT ON THE SIDE, ZZAP! 64, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than 10th September, Please don't forget to include your name, full address and telephone number if possible. What are waiting for? . . . Get scribbling!

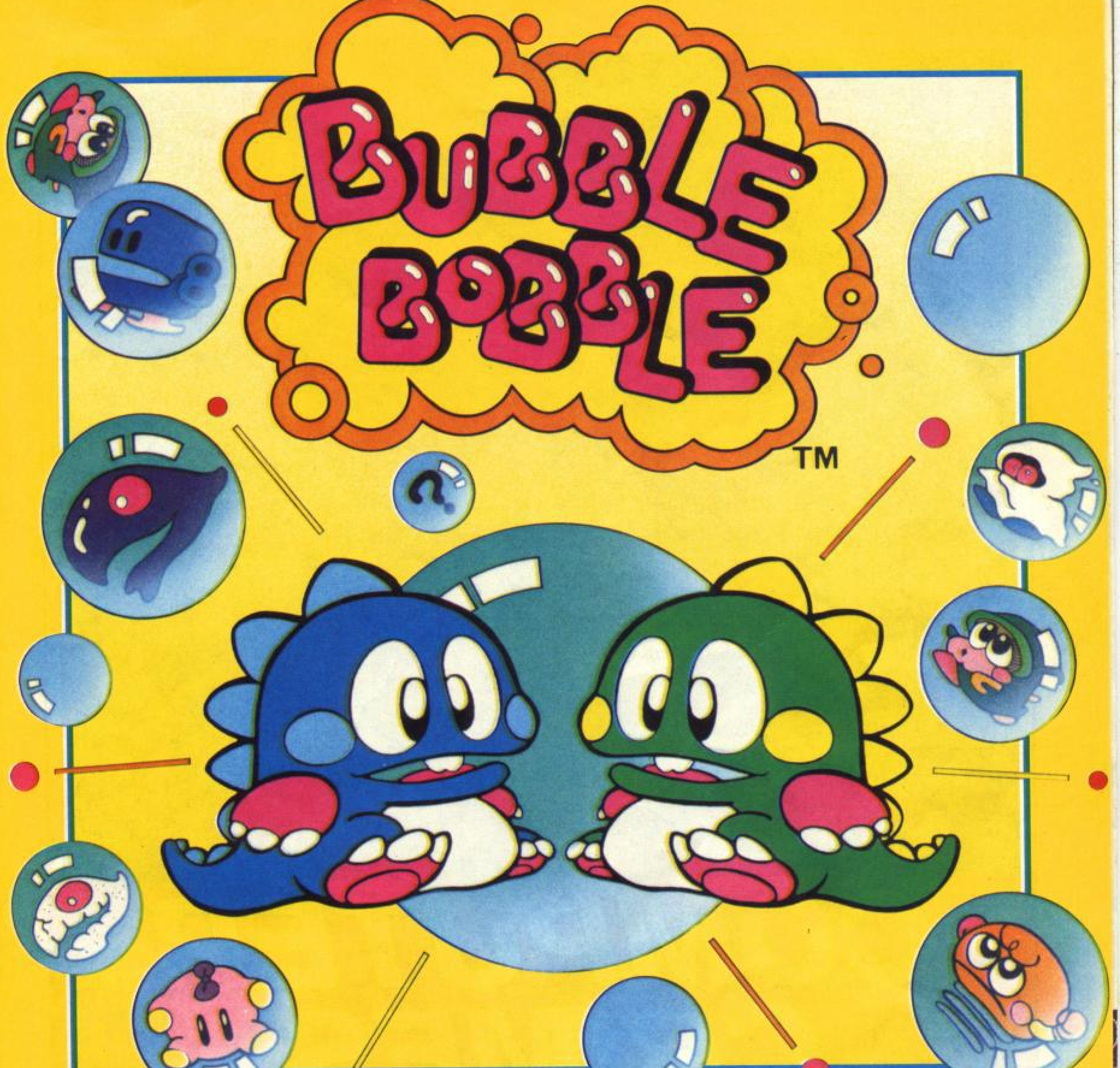




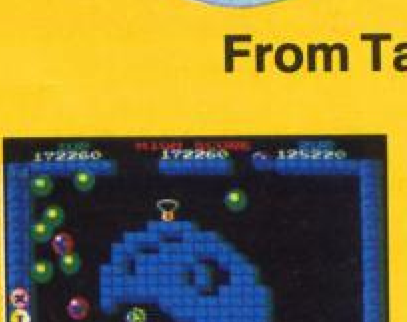
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Prepare yourself for the greatest adventure yet – The GUILD of THIEVES. The ultimate challenge for master criminals everywhere.

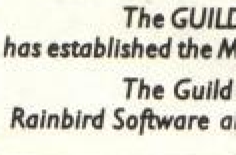
Your mission, to gain membership of the prestigious Guild of Thieves. But first you must successfully return from a mythical isle within Kerovnia having stolen its hidden treasures.

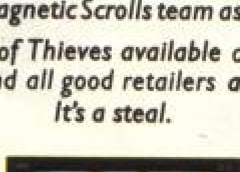
Now the prospect of looting and pillaging the island may seem enticing, but you'll need all the ingenuity you can muster, and of course criminal cunning as you try to unravel clue after clue and solve a wealth of devious puzzles.

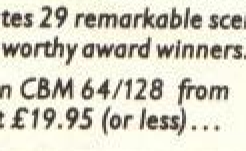
With its sensational text and dazzling graphics The GUILD of THIEVES is a quest that's sure to tax the most resourceful mastermind. After all, as every Guild member knows, only crime pays.

The GUILD of THIEVES incorporates 29 remarkable scene - setting graphics and the kind of complex intrigue and surprise that has established the Magnetic Scrolls team as worthy award winners.

The Guild of Thieves available on CBM 64/128 from Rainbird Software and all good retailers at £19.95 (or less)... It's a steal.







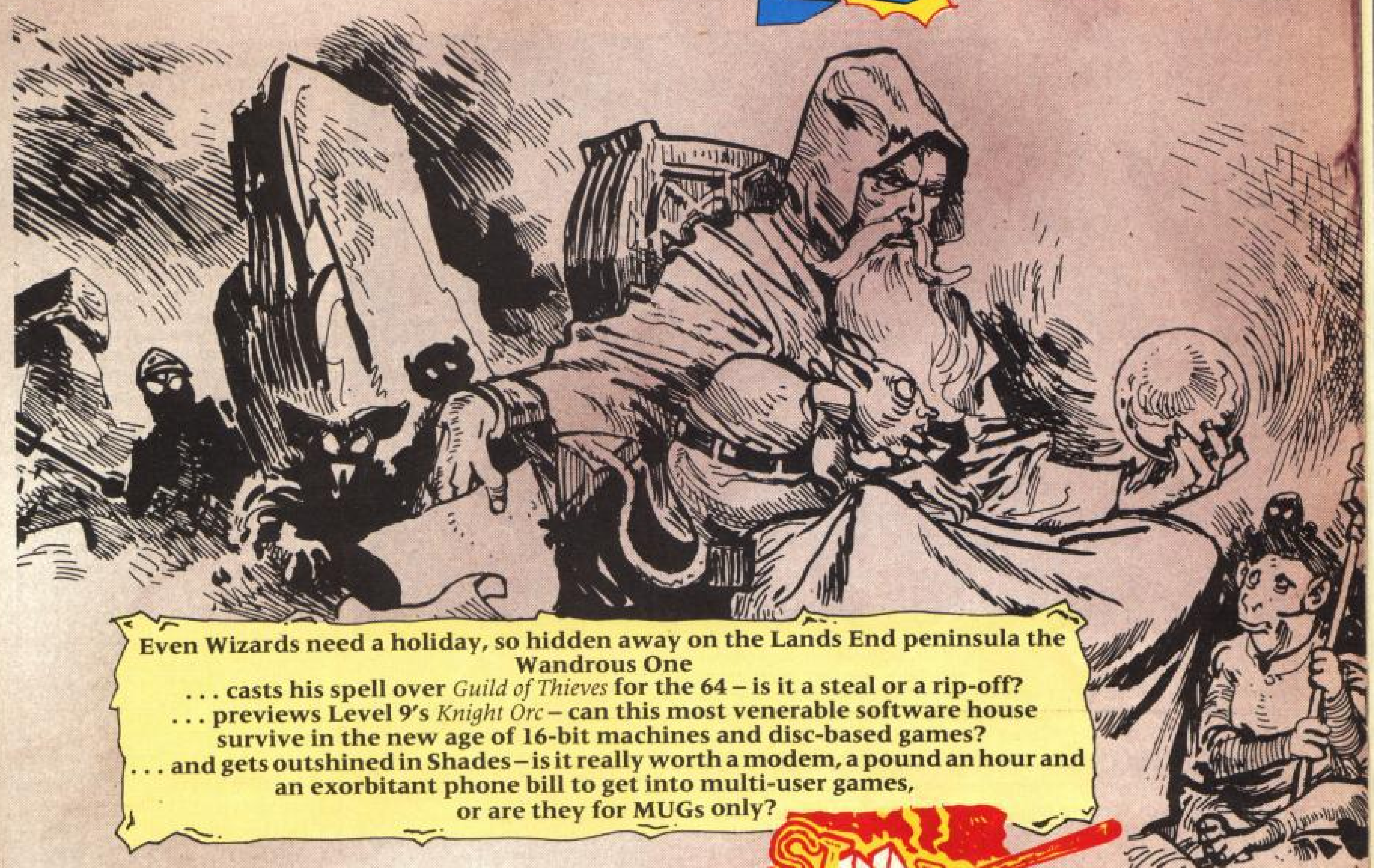
Screenshots stolen from the ATARI ST version.

The GUILD of THIEVES

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Even Wizards need a holiday, so hidden away on the Lands End peninsula the Wandrous One
. . . casts his spell over *Guild of Thieves* for the 64 – is it a steal or a rip-off?
. . . previews Level 9's *Knight Orc* – can this most venerable software house survive in the new age of 16-bit machines and disc-based games?
. . . and gets outshined in Shades – is it really worth a modem, a pound an hour and an exorbitant phone bill to get into multi-user games, or are they for MUGs only?

Guild of Thieves

SIZZLER

Magnetic Scrolls/Rainbird, £19.95, disk only

We've already taken a preview peek at this game on the Atari ST but now we've got the 64 version the Wiz can give you the low low-down.

First let's do a bit of image stripping so we can see what the game itself is actually like. Magnetic Scrolls leaped into the headlines last year with *The Pawn* – stupendous parser, brill graphics, interactive characters, original scenario, new software house (well almost), Rainbird marketing and multi-format availability.

The last two points are very significant – there are really only four companies in the UK that have marketed their games forcefully across all formats – Adventure International (now defunct) Adventuresoft (via US Gold) Level 9 and Melbourne House. Some might wish to include CRL, but it only just scrapes in as it's not a dedicated adventure house. Magnetic Scrolls is therefore a big fish – albeit in a very small pool.

Secondly a lot of this media hype arose because of the strength of the parser and the graphics. Journalists who would never have been seen dead playing an adventure suddenly went all ga-ga because of the pretty pictures. And the parser meant that they could communicate with the game. Therefore a whole legion of self-appointed adventure reviewers sprung up proclaiming *The Pawn* to be the best thing since sliced bread.

Meanwhile for us dedicated adventurers the real question has yet to be answered – are these Magnetic Scrolls adventures actually good games? Are they worth your £19.95, or is 90% of the satisfaction derived from just looking at the pretty pics and entering PUT THE IVORY KEY IN THE SWAG BAG AND THEN DROP THE POISON ON THE STEPS.

The Wiz sat down to play *Guild of Thieves* with slight misgivings. I wondered why this was and realised to my horror that I hadn't actually enjoyed playing *The Pawn* very much. Sacrilege! But although others will doubtless disagree, I felt that it was just a bit pretentious. It had some great puzzles, but the scenario was a bit odd . . . well let's say I found it a bit – gulp – dull!

So it came as quite a pleasant surprise when I found myself getting very engrossed in *Guild of Thieves*. It may not be as original or way out as some of the things we've seen lately, but it's definitely shaping up to be one of the Wiz's favourite games.

You start off sitting in a boat in mid-stream with a representative of the Guild. To gain admission to this august body you must loot the surrounding countryside of all its valuables. So unlike *The Pawn* we have here a very traditional scenario – the good ol' treasure hunt.

If you're wondering why there should be anything good about sticking to traditional themes instead of inventing startling new plots, the answer is that the very structure of adventure programs revolves heavily around locations and objects. It makes sense therefore to have a scenario that rewards the discovery of locations and objects with good solid points! So traditionalists will note with glee the score counter constantly displayed at the top of the screen (together with the number of moves you've made).

The parser is once again magnificent. You can make a lot of use of your good ol' swag bag for example. PUT ALL EXCEPT THE LAMP IN THE SWAG BAG AND CLOSE IT will execute rapidly and without difficulty. This means that playing the game becomes an enjoyable exercise of the imagination, rather than a battle of misunderstood words.

As you move about you'll start to make use of another feature of the parser – the GO TO command. Once you've visited a location or EXAMINEd and object you can GO TO it from another place. In the Golden Wheatfield for example typing GO TO TEMPLE or GO TO STATUE will take you rapidly through the intervening locations to the temple (where the statue is).

There are two points to note about the GO TO command. First it can kill you if you're not careful. For example typing GO TO TEMPLE in the Lounge will take you out of the castle by way of the raised drawbridge and irate door keeper – not a very good idea, and once you've entered the command you can't take it back.

Second it appears to GO only TO objects that you've actually EXAMINEd. This can be misleading. Take the temple again – the room description says clearly that there is a statue there, but entering GO TO STATUE later will do you no good unless you've examined it. Apparently, seeing it is not enough.



The GO TO command *is* particularly useful when storing your treasure. Valuables aren't that difficult to find to start with, but the inexperienced player may wonder why picking them up doesn't increase his/her score. The answer is that they only register when you've put them in one of the Bank of Kerovnia's safety deposit boxes.

Use of the safety deposit boxes highlights another excellent feature of this adventure – the game design. All of the puzzles are wonderfully constructed – logical, sometimes quite difficult, and very satisfying to solve. For example, the safes will not relinquish an article once it's been put inside. So you have to be quite careful about banking your treasures, making sure first that what you have is a treasure and not something that you will require later on.

Having played the game on both the Commodore and the ST, I found one aspect to be less than satisfying – the disc accesses. The game comes on two discs, and although actual disc swapping is kept to a bare minimum, the old 1541 grinds away for ages. Even Infocom disc accesses seem quicker than these, and at tense moments I found the delays a real annoyance.

There's a particularly long access when the game loads in a new graphic scene. The pics are great, but if (as with most people) your expectations have been raised by seeing the Atari screenshots that most other magazines printed, then you are in for a slight disappointment. You certainly won't find yourself complaining about the lack of illustration, although sometimes you may find yourself wasting time examining objects that are clearly shown in the drawings, but don't in fact exist within the program.

Guild of Thieves is an excellent program, combining Magnetic Scrolls' programming expertise with a more accessible scenario and some excellent puzzles. It should take you a long time to finish and numerous SAVEs will be needed. Sadly there's no RAM-save option and – equally annoying – no catalogue function to enable you to check up on previous saved filenames. However, these are minor quibbles about a game that's destined to be a classic. Even at £19.95 you can't go far wrong.

Atmosphere	85%
Interaction	91%
Challenge	89%
Overall	**90%**

ADVENTURE PREVIEW!

Knight Orc

Level 9/Rainbird, £19.95

The Wiz has yet to play a 64 version of this game so this is a preview rather than a proper review. However, as *Knight Orc* is a crucial release for Level 9, I'm bringing you my impressions of the game as played on the Atari ST. The days are passed when the Austins were the only people to take the adventure market seriously – and as a result were the only people taken seriously by adventurers. Level 9 were kings of the cassette market, but nowadays disc drives are becoming more common – as are machines with more memory and better graphics facilities. Level 9 made their name with text compression and text-only games – but can they survive in the new era?

The game comes with a chunky booklet including full instructions for play and a short 'novella' detailing the exploits of Grok Grindleguts and other orcs. It's quite readable stuff, incorporating a gay dragon, a hoard of treasure, a tavern and a sense of humour. The novella sets the scene for the game itself which falls into three sections – Loosed Orc, A Kind of Magic and Hordes of the Mountain King. However, you don't have to read the novella to get on in the game.

Apart from an upgraded parser (see below) the real difference between *Knight Orc* and previous Level 9 games is the inclusion of interactive characters. As Pete



Austin remarked recently 'The range of puzzles you can have that involve picking up and using objects has been thoroughly explored – introducing characters has to be the next step.' No sooner said than done it seems.

In *Knight Orc*, as you control the actions of orcine Grindleguts you can FOLLOW another character, address another character using the NAME MESSAGE format, and even WAIT FOR another character to arrive. Much of the game's challenge lies in recruiting allies, so you'll find yourself doing quite a bit of communication.

One of the best aspects of this interaction is the ability to 'queue' commands to other characters. The manual gives this typical example . . .

TROLL, WAIT 2, IN, KILL VAMPIRE
MOUSE, WAIT 1, IN, KILL VAMPIRE
IN, KILL VAMPIRE

Entering the above three commands in sequence outside the vampire's lair brings all three of you into the lair for a simultaneous attack on the blood-sucker.

The fact is however that Level 9 still have a lot to learn when it comes to actually programming interactive characters. There are occasional gaffs as in . . .

DENZYL WHO ARE YOU

To which Denzyl replies 'I'll get onto it at once.' Hmmm . . .

Denzyl and other characters also suffer from the program's rather unconvincing technique of printing little messages about them at intervals – as if to persuade us that the characters really do have lives of their own. So as you hang around Denzyl, the program will suddenly come up with 'He mumbles quietly' or something similar. This is a bit like *The Hobbit* where Thorin 'starts singing about gold'. I can understand the designer's intention behind such messages, but after a while they become jarring and unconvincing. Magnetic Scrolls' characters (and Infocom's) don't advertise their presence quite so obviously – and are more effective as a result.

Like all of Level 9's recent games, *Knight Orc* comes complete with graphics. As I said, I've only seen the ST version, but this was enough to persuade me that the company have taken heed of previous criticism on the piccy front. The graphics are quite unlike those on their earlier games, and I expect that people will either love or hate them. I've included an ST screenshot so you can see what I mean. The effect is slightly like one of watercolour, and I found them a very effective contrast to the usual approach of trying for an almost photographic realism (as in *Guild of Thieves*).

The company have also taken a leaf out of Magnetic Scrolls' book by making the graphics scrollable – you can scroll them up and down the screen as required. Unfortunately the effect is rather jerky, but perhaps they'll fix this in the production versions. I certainly hope so – if you're going to borrow other people's ideas you've got to equal them at least, otherwise you run the risk of appearing naff.

As for the subject matter, well . . . The Wiz isn't quite so sure about this. *The Pawn* may have been 'way out', and *Guild of Thieves* may be more successful because of its traditional structure, but I can't help feeling that *Knight Orc* carries things a little too far backwards. Okay, so treasure magic and battles are great topics for an adventure, but do we have to stick to Middle Earth-type scenarios? Aren't we all just a teensy-weensy bit sick of Orcs? Can't we think of a new way to introduce special effects into a game rather than relying on the old CAST SPELL command? Apparently not . . .

So what's good about *Knight Orc* apart from the characters? The parser has been improved and you can now GO TO or RUN TO another location. You can also FIND an object and use the words EVERYTHING and EVERYBODY. The use of EXCEPT is also allowed. I don't think that anybody's going to have cause to complain about the interaction.

Secondly, the game (like all Level 9 releases) doesn't shrink from occasionally taking a pot-shot at the real world. Whether this appeals to you or not depends on your own views of society. For example if the idea that a dubious member of the clergy might in fact be a 'sweaty paedophile' appeals to you, then you're sure to enjoy *Knight Orc*'s social 'observations'.

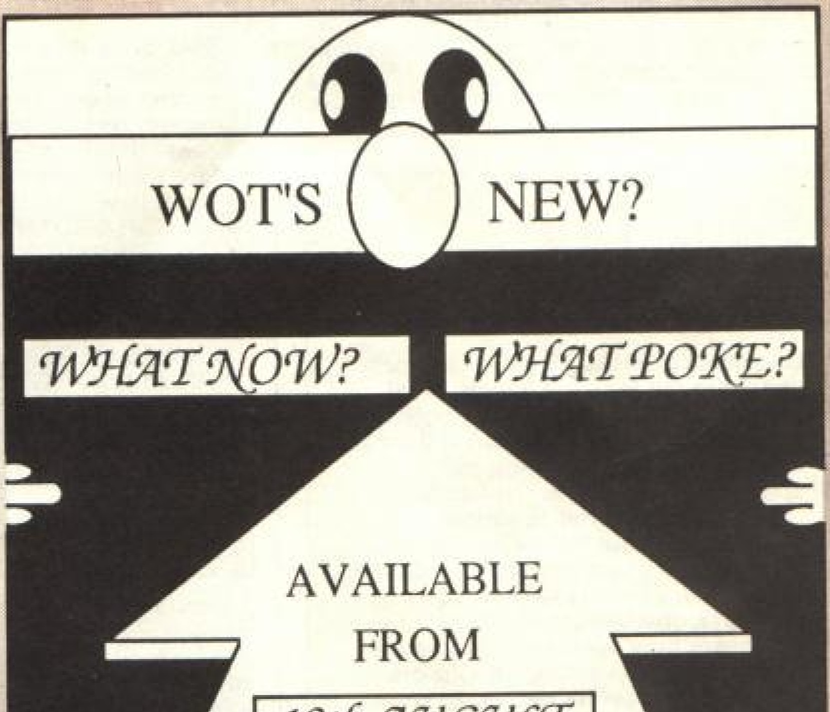
Finally there's the usual Level 9 sense of humour throughout. Sometimes it gets a bit 'cliquey' – anyone who's never played MUD in particular will find the first few minutes quite baffling. The Wiz (who's renowned for his lack of sense of humour when it comes to adventures) did actually laugh occasionally as certain male voices cried out in the distance.

The nitty-gritty is that nowadays we are seeing an increasing involvement of more accomplished games designers in adventure writing. Scott Adams and *Adventureland* have been replaced by Douglas Adams and *Hitchhikers*, and powerful game generators like the system used by Magnetic Scrolls are being made available to more writers. More importantly though, adventurers have come to expect a bit more than the old 'fur between the toes' magic spells and fire-breathing dragons.

With *Knight Orc*, Level 9 look set to demonstrate that in matters of programming techniques the company are going to maintain a strong position in the market. The question of game design is less easy to answer, but then that problem can be solved at a stroke by bringing in better outside authors. In the meantime the final verdict on *Knight Orc* must wait until we extensively play-test the Commodore version.



Rainbird's Chief Orc, Adrian Howells, *Orc*-estrates an attack on ZZAP! towers



THEIR FUTURE'S

SHADES is the multi-user game run by Micronet and available to all Micronet and Prestel subscribers. If you've never played a Multi-User Game on-line before, then this is an ideal introduction. What's it like to bask in SHADES?

The Wiz recently went on a tour of SHADES in the delightful company of Sappho the Witch. Sappho is one of a select band of 33 Wizards, Witches and Arch-Wizards who have reached the pinnacle of SHADES, where – like MUD – the objective is to reach Wizard (or Witch) status by collecting treasure and treating other players with proper respect . . . killing them that is.

MUD, which the Wiz has already looked at this year, is a scrolling text format game, but SHADES is of course in Viewdata format. This has the advantage of adding colour to the proceedings, but it is slightly less suitable for long textual interaction. As it turns out this is not a drawback in the game, as SHADES is a very different animal to play than MUD – it's less formal, more friendly in the early stages, and much more dependent on interaction between the players.

Sappho herself has played MUD about seven times 'I got killed each time within a few moves and found the other players to be rather intolerant of beginners.' This is also something the Wiz has experienced, but it's not because MUD is an unfriendly place. The reason is probably partly to do with the system itself – MUD is a dedicated multi-user adventure system, whereas SHADES, being part of Micronet, can be played by anyone who suddenly has a whimsy to go trekking and treasure hunting.

'There are three types of people who play SHADES,' says Sappho, 'the 'T' (treasure) hunters, the killers, and the chatters.' The Killers, although they sound a little unpleasant, are in fact an essential part of the game – giving it a certain thrill that would otherwise be missing. Since you can have different personae on SHADES, most people will create two characters for different purposes – one for killing, for example, and one for exploration.

The chatters are people who drop in from other areas of Micronet just for a quick natter with other SHADEists (as players are called), whereas the 'T' hunters dedicate themselves to the pursuit of material wealth.

SHADES was written by Neil Newell and inspired by MUD, back in 1985/6. The game differs partly because of its structure, in that only eight players can play a game simultaneously – if more than eight players log on then a new game is created. Up to eight games can run at the same time, which means that up to 64 players can be logged onto the system at once, Under certain circumstances this can be doubled by running another system in parallel, giving facilities for 128 players.

As far as you're concerned, there will only be eight, however. Couple this with the fact that the game resets automatically every 45 minutes, and you can see that for a beginner the program is rather less daunting then MUD. To start with, you've got only seven human opponents, and secondly the frequent resets guarantee that you'll find at least *some* treasure.

Despite the small number of players in each game, SHADES is a very lively place. This is because there are a large number of mobiles in the game – computer controlled interactive characters that lead a life of their own. The characters are very well developed and have very distinct characteristics. Whether you encounter a Mouse or a Demon, you'll still have to be on your guard to protect your valuables, or possibly even your life.

SHADES is also very lively because of the enormous number of interactive commands that encourage the human players to talk to

SHADY TACTICS

One class of SHADES player is worth watching out for – the 'killer'. Most players will at some time or another go on a 'killing' spree, and many will create a persona (or game character) specifically as a 'killer' character.

The reason for this is simple – knocking off your fellow men and women gets you a share of their points. Some killers go on the rampage regularly, changing their names whenever they meet a gruesome end, and thereby preventing other more innocent characters getting to know who they are.

It can be quite an emotional experience for a player to lose a character to a killer – particularly if you've spent a lot of time building that character up and have come to identify closely with it. Any disappointment, however, is likely to be tempered by the knowledge that you've done similar things to other players in the past.

If you do get killed by an attacker, you lose half your points and must start building up your character again. If you attack someone else, however, and they kill you, then you are reduced to NOVICE statues, regardless of how advanced your character was when you set out. There is a price to pay for homicidal tendencies!

LETTING IT ALL HANG OUT

SHADES really encourages you to share your feelings with others. The huge number of emotional commands encourage interaction, and do much to create the game's unique atmosphere. Here's a selection of what you can try on your fellow SHADEists . . .

BLUSH GROAN SLAP BOOGIE GROWL SNARL BOP HEHE SNEER CHEER LAUGH SNIFF CHUCKLE MUMBLE SNIGGER CLAP PEER SOB CRINGE POGO STRUT CRY QUAKE SULK FOAM SCREAM TAP GIBBER SHRUG WAVE GIGGLE WIGH WHISTLE CUDDLE KISS EMOTE HUG STROKE KICK WINK XPLODE YAWN.

Some of these simply allow you to let off steam, whereas others (like HUG) are interactive and require you to find someone to get friendly with.

GAME OUTLINE

Micronet Shades are landscapes of dreams and adventures reached by a gateway on Micronet. Players roam the lands, using the eight points of the compass and commands such as IN, OUT, UP and DOWN.

The aim is to score as many points as possible by collecting treasure and dropping it into the Mad King's room in the castle. Having scored some points it is a good idea to save, because unsaved points are lost if you get killed or cut off.

The objects scattered around the lands are classified as Treasure, Tools (Keys that give you access to Treasure, for example) and Weapons (that you may use to kill or defend yourself against attacks). Some objects fall into more than one category.

Attacks from other players and Mobiles (computer generated creatures that roam the land) must be fended off. If you are attacked you may defend yourself by typing Retaliate with (weapon). If you have no weapon you may be killed unless you flee out. Doing this, however, will lose you 3% of your points.

You can try to kill another player or mobile by typing Kill (player) – or with a Weapon, Kill (player) with (weapon).

If you attempt to kill a player and you, yourself, are killed, you will lose all of your points. If another player attacks you and kills you, you only lose half.

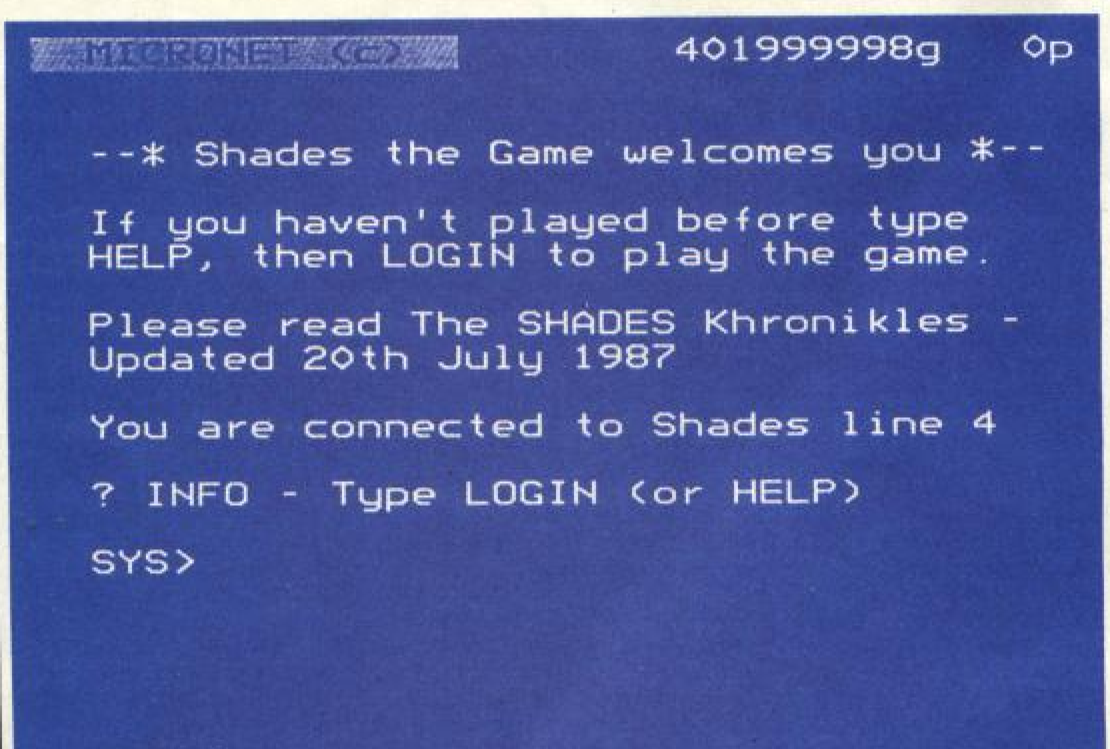
All mobiles and players are liable to attack you without warning. The Strange Little Girl, however, is useful, as touching her regains lost stamina.

You start as a novice, passing through the higher levels as you gain points, until eventually you reach Wizard status. Your Stamina, Strength, and ability to cast Spells increase as you progress.

It is a good idea to 'map' the land as you play. To help you along, Micronet have produced a basic map of the land. There are many locations not included on this, but it's up to you to discover them for yourself.

SO BRIGHT . . .





each other, hug each other, and generally carry on. You can Pogo, Boogie, Kiss, Hug, Sniff, Snigger – and a whole lot more. Best of all, there's a command called EMOTE which enables you to do almost anything to anyone else, by typing EMOTE (message). This enables you to define your own emotional activity – hmmm . . . could be interesting. As Sappho points out, commands like EMOTE mean that in SHADES you can literally have a party between players.

In fact his spirit of interaction extends right outside the game. 'I've got a lot of personal friends who I've met through the game. There are pub evenings and get-togethers, though most seem to happen down South in London – London seems to be the meeting place for SHADEists.' But that doesn't mean that there won't be many players near you – wherever you live. There are many players in the North of England, for example, and because Prestel/Micronet is accessible for the cost of a local call almost all over the country, it won't cost you the earth to log on. MUD by comparison requires either a long distance call to London or a special PSS link.

The Wiz found SHADES a far more energetic game than MUD. There is something rather grandiose about the Multi-User Dungeon – the location descriptions are long and in vivid, grand style, the players tend to be slightly aloof – especially from novices. In general, the atmosphere seems to be one of dedication to the straight and narrow path of adventure, with some interaction providing an added dimension to the game. However, in SHADES, I think it's true to say that interaction *is* the game. For some serious adventurers, this may not be so attractive, and some might even find SHADES a little childish – but for those who thirst for a chat and a quick treasure hunt with the minimum of fuss it's a great game.

There are currently rumours of a new MUG appearing within Micronet, but to date nothing is fixed. SHADES costs you 1.62 pence per minute to play (6p a minute if you're on Prestel but not on Micronet) plus Prestel log-on charges. That's not too much to fork out, and there's currently a special offer giving five hours free play. If you're not on either Prestel or Micronet, then you might like to know that the company are doing a special deal, offering a free modem with every subscription to the service.

To play SHADES on Micronet, go to page *8118#. To join Prestel/Micronet, write to them at DURRANT HOUSE, B HERBAL HILL, LONDON, EC1R 5EJ. Telephone 01 278 3143. If you're of the easy-going social type, I can recommend a dip into the game – MUD may be the more serious quest for some, but in SHADES you can set your sights on Wizard-dom – and Boogie all the way!

IN COMMAND

Here's a list of commands available in SHADES – many of them can be abbreviated, which is a distinct advantage when speed of interaction helps you make progress and save log-on costs.

BRIEF COMMANDS DOWN DROP EAST FLEE FOLLOW GET GIVE GO INVENTORY KILL LOSE MOVE NORTH NORTHEAST NORTHWEST PICK POWER QUIT RETALIATE RUN SAVE SAY SCORE SHOUT SOUTH SOUTHEAST SOUTHWEST STEAL SUMMON TAKE TELL UP VALUE VERBOSE WALK WEIGHT WEST WHERE WHO


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IN THIS CRUCIAL WEST COAST COMPETITION



Once again the Epyx net hauls in a ZZAP! Gold Medal, and to celebrate, those hip dudes at US Gold have decided to give away some of the equipment featured in this summery sports simulation.

After drooling over the events featured in our review, how d'ya fancy a shot at roller skating? or skateboarding – complete with all the necessary protective gear? Frisbee throwing, or even a swift go with a hackysack? Totally awesome!

The staggering prize which Epyx are offering the winner of this competition includes a skateboard, a pair of roller-skates, a protective helmet, elbow and kneepads, a hackysack, and a frisbee! All this and a copy of the game too! The 40 unfortunate runners-up will have to make do with a copy of the game each – ahhhh!

If you think you're cool enough to swagger off with all this booty, then strut down to the foot of the page and tackle the six tricky Californian quizzers. When this is done, complete the tie-breaking sentence in 15 words or less. Write your answers on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send them to . . . THE 'I'M SO COOL THAT ICE SHIVERS AT MY NAME' COMPETITION, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1AQ.

Entries should cruise in by September 10th – and don't forget to include your name, address and telephone number. The lucky beach bums will be informed soon after, but until then, stay cool . . .

QUESTIONS

1. Name all the members of the Beach Boys?
2. What is the surfing classic tune which features in the recent Guinness advert?
3. Jan and Dean hit the top with their own surfing record . . . name it!
4. What are the names of the five previous Epyx sports simulations?
5. Where did the term 'Frisbee' originally come from?

'I *know* I'm cool enough to own all this gear 'cos . . .

MANOEUVRES

With Philippa Irving



RATIONALISED RATINGS

Normal service is resumed this month, after a brief break last month to panic over my finals. Finals at Oxford are conducted in a curious manner, which involves dressing up in black dinner jackets and bow ties and sitting for 30 hours in a building made of pink marble. It amounted to psychological disorientation on a grand scale, and left me little time to go to war. What did I get? I don't know yet . . . probably a second like everyone else.

I thought I'd devote this month's introduction to explaining my ratings system in detail.

PRESENTATION

Presentation involves everything that doesn't directly relate to the game, excluding the graphics (which, even in a strategy game, can be said to be part of the gameplay). So that doesn't just mean the packaging (though packaging *is* important when you've paid for a product), it means the general on-screen appearance, whether the program looks 'tatty round the edges', and – importantly – what impression the 'front end' makes. In a strategy game there often has to be a complex orders system, and this can be very badly designed when programmers really make an effort.

GRAPHICS

This is self-explanatory, but I try to consider the distinction between prettiness and usefulness. Good graphics are those which are appropriate to the game, and so a few simple, elegantly designed lines can be better than a screenful of messy colour if the game's idea is better expressed that way.

RULES

Rules are vitally important to a strategy game, which so often has to exist in the imagination. I prefer to see the game mechanics explained (though others don't like this), and therefore I always commend background detail.

AUTHENTICITY

This is a nebulous quality. To what extent can a stylised set of boxes and lines on a television screen ever be said to be authentic – especially when what they're trying to represent is a noisy, smoking, muddy battlefield in the Napoleonic Wars? Authenticity is the factor by which a game, through its various aspects, manages to reduce the gap between reality and what's on screen.

PLAYABILITY

Playability may be generated differently by arcade games and strategy games, but the effect on the player is much the same. Playability can probably be boiled down to 'the promise of more', and it's faintly analagous to an absorbing plot in a television drama. Empty and unsatisfactory games can have a high degree of initial playability – who, once started, can resist watching 'Neighbours'?

OVERALL

I feel I can give a game a high overall percentage without much reference to the individual ratings. A game may be badly presented, have weedy and obstructive graphics, rules which hardly cover the back of the inlay, and try to claim that Napoleon invaded India . . . and still remain fascinating. Most of the individual ratings are descriptive, but the last three are evaluative.

Having said all that, I wouldn't take ratings very seriously. Most of what I really have to say about the game is contained within the body of the review, and the best way of judging whether or not you would like to buy it is to study that and decide if it sounds like the sort of game you'd enjoy.



SHARD OF SPRING

SSI, £19.99 disk only

Shard of Spring is a game of a type I would usually pour scorn upon, the computer 'fantasy roleplaying game'. As a real live roleplayer, I'm deeply convinced that it is not possible to reproduce the experience of this sort of game on a computer. And although *Shard of Spring* is a very playable piece of entertainment software, it's good for reasons other than those which it intends.

The action takes place on the island of Ymros, where until recently, it was always Spring. This phenomenon was brought about by the presence on the island of the Shard of the title, and, due apparently to appalling careless security precautions, this desirable piece of crystalware has been stolen by an evil witch called Siriadne. The temptress has threatened to destroy the crystal and thus turn Ymros into an icy wasteland unless the peasants pay tributes to her. The field is clearly wide open for adventurers to do their stuff.

What we really have here is an excuse to string together a collection of dungeons, quests and wilderness encounters (to use the roleplaying technical terms), based around a structure of character advancement and acquisition of wealth. The possibility of eventually winning by achieving the ultimate objective is also held out. Most of the game is spent in melee, so it's fortunate that the close combat system is extremely good.

The first thing to do is to 'roll up' a party. A party must consist of at least two, and can contain as many as five characters. There is no advantage at all in having fewer than five in your party, as they all add to the firepower and don't cost much to feed. A human character can either be a Warrior or a Wizard, and the other races have already had the choice made for them.

Characters are allocated statistics in the usual range of 'attributes' by random computer dice-rolls. Although it seems absurd to give a computer character a statistic for its intelligence, the 'intellect' attribute makes itself useful by governing how many skill points can be spent on skills like the ability to use a sword, or to hunt. Similarly, the 'skill' attribute itself determines the percentage chance of hitting a target, and strength adds a damage modifier. When the game lunges into melee combat, the use of all the attributes is brought immediately to the surface of the gameplay. They have no feeling of irrelevance, as happens so often in this type of game.

Warrior characters can choose from a list of skills specific to them. They need to have a weapon skill of some sort, but more unusual skills include armoured skin and persuasiveness, which lets the character negotiate a discount on items sold in shops. Wizard skills are slightly different, because choosing one of the five 'rune' skills allows the wizard to have at his command a range of six or seven spells. Finally, and essentially, the character is named. The latter half of this name has a tendency to be swallowed by the program when it feels like it, which gives an amateurish impression.

All characters are stored on a separate disk (one of yours, which the program formats for you), and once you've created as many as you want you can arrange them into parties. There's space on the disk for 25 characters and five parties, but you can only go out adventuring with one party at a time.

Having swapped disks round once more and entered the game, the player finds his party represented by a single figure in the middle of a map. The map is pretty enormous, and I can vouch for that because I've been mapping it. What you see on the screen at any one time is a portion nine by nine square of the landscape surrounding your party. The basic terrain types are plain, forest, mountains and marsh, bounded by water. Special locations, such as towns and the entrances to underground complexes, are easily identifiable. As might be expected it takes longer to cross a mountain square than a plain square, but the game is not set in 'real time'. The hour of the day and the day of the month can be called up at any time. After a certain number of hours it begins to get dark, and at this point it's a good idea to set up camp and sleep.

You can set up camp at any time of the day, and it's often essential because it's the only way to access a wider range of options. Once encamped the player can examine individual members of the party, try to identify potions and items found, swap round equipment and heal each other's wounds. The inadvisability of taking too literal a view of the game is illustrated in this procedure. If a character buys a weapon and a set of armour in a town, before he can put on the armour and get the weapon ready to hand he has to leave the town, go a little way out into the country, and pitch a tent!

Combat is extremely well-managed – and this is a good thing, for if it weren't one of the best aspects of the game, the whole program would be a disaster. When they party stumbles across something to wave its swords at – and you don't see them coming – the screen display changes to a blow-up of the area, with characters shown for the first time as individual figures. Combat always starts with the opposing sides a few squares apart. This is where movement points become the currency of combat; it costs two movement points to move one square, one to turn around, and three to make an attack. Each character, friend or foe, takes his turn according to speed. A character's accuracy and ability to inflict damage depends on his skill rating, his strength, the type of weapon he's using and the opponent's armour.

The landscape is interspersed with dungeons and towns. At the towns you can buy weapons, armour and foods, take your characters up levels, and meet that familiar roleplaying figure . . . the old man in the pub who tells you what your next quest will be. The dungeons take you into the usual subterranean corridors populated with monsters and hiding treasure.

Although I'm sceptical on principal about this sort of game, there's no doubt that *Shard of Spring* is an excellent design. The island is a graded exercise in adventuring, with the wilderness and dungeons on the East side containing easier monsters than those on the West. It's playable to the point of being addictive. Testimony to this is the fact that a friend and I sat up to half past two playing it, when we were in the last weeks before our Finals.

What the game lacks is imaginative design, and because of that, atmosphere. But I can certainly recommend it, even to those who don't think they like roleplaying on a computer.

PRESENTATION 55%
A generally lacklustre appearance, including a clumsy orders system and long and irritating pauses for disk access.

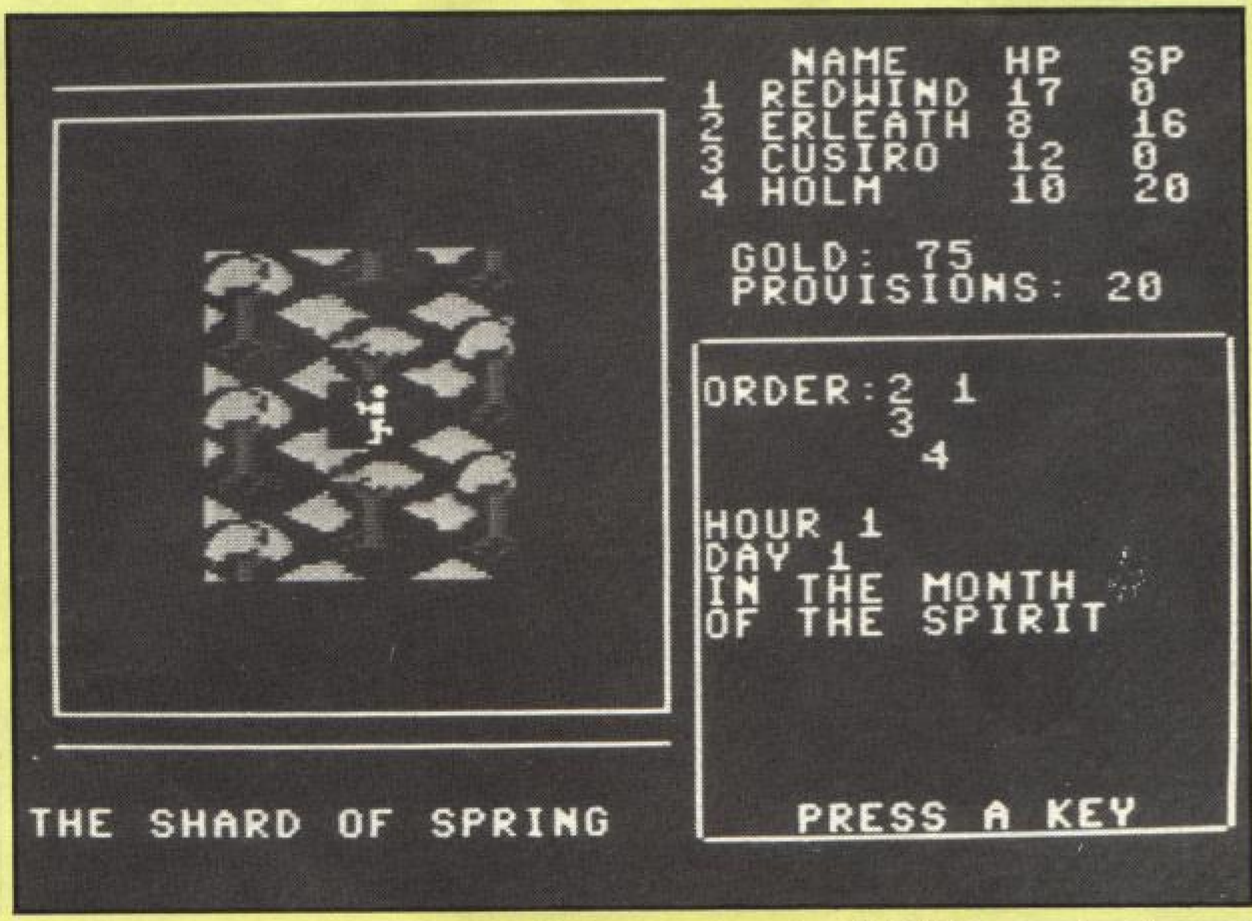
GRAPHICS 65%
The representation of the wilderness is adequate but dull.

RULES 88%
Clear descriptions, with tables describing some of the game's mechanics.

AUTHENTICITY 60%
Although giving a sense of vastness and variety, disbelief is never suspended for very long.

PLAYABILITY 90%
Absorbing, tantalising, and satisfying.

OVERALL 88%
Just short of brilliant.



AUTO DUEL

Origin Systems, £19.95 disk only

When I took over the ZZAP! strategy reviews I expected the games I'd be sent to be different, but I did not expect to find a toolkit in one. And I don't mean a software toolkit, I mean a miniature set of screwdrivers with a tiny hammer and a tiny wrench tucked together in a neat plastic pouch. This I suppose is called imaginative packaging; though the kind of cars *AutoDuel* deals with are likely to need a somewhat larger maintenance kit.

Apart from the toolkit, the *AutoDuel* package offers a substantial 32 page rulebook and a colourful fold-out road map – oh yes . . . and a disk. The game incorporates an arcade element which is central to the gameplay. Therefore strategy gamers who have no patience with games which demand a degree of joystick-waggling will not be enamoured of this release.

The setting is the kind of arid, technological, aggressively bleak future that Americans seem to anticipate. The roads between the major 'fortress cities' have become almost impassable unless you're driving an armoured tank, and the favourite spectator sport is combat to the death in the autoduelling arenas. Also, the only way of transporting goods is to pay freelance couriers to battle their way along the motorway. Into this environment you arrive, with the open-ended ambition of earning a lot of money, building up a nice car, and gaining repute.

You start out as a raw, untested candidate for greatness, with a small amount of money and no vehicle to call your own. The game opens in New York, with 15 other cities to hit later on; you are first of all asked to create a character for the driver by spending 50 points between the three skills of driving ability, marksmanship and mechanical ability. The character of the driver is therefore very simply defined, the real complexity being reserved for the much more important creation of the car.

A poor driving ability means that the car can become impossible to control properly with the joystick if tyres blow, and low marksmanship makes it difficult to hit an opponent's car. This is an uneasy interface between game reality and physical reality. In an arcade game (and lots of sequences in *AutoDuel* are clearly demanding an arcade-style approach), the interaction between the human player, the joystick, and the movement on screen is a real event. A strategy game exists much more in the imagination, which is why strategy games can get away with bad graphics. Character statistics relating to ability very definitely belong to this imaginative sphere, and when they get between the movement on screen and the player's own, real developing ability at manipulating the movement it is irritating.

This is the background to a more serious objection. The graphics in the action sequences are not at all good. The car you drive, no matter how complex on paper, always looks like a very simple Mini viewed from above. The arenas in each town are identical, consisting of stick-like fencing and rocks with a lot of blank space. But when you hit the mean hard motorways of the 21st century, it's disappointing to find that the landscape looks rather like a child's drawing. Nice white fences, little cows by the roadside, well-kept homesteads and trees conspire to ridicule the scenario.



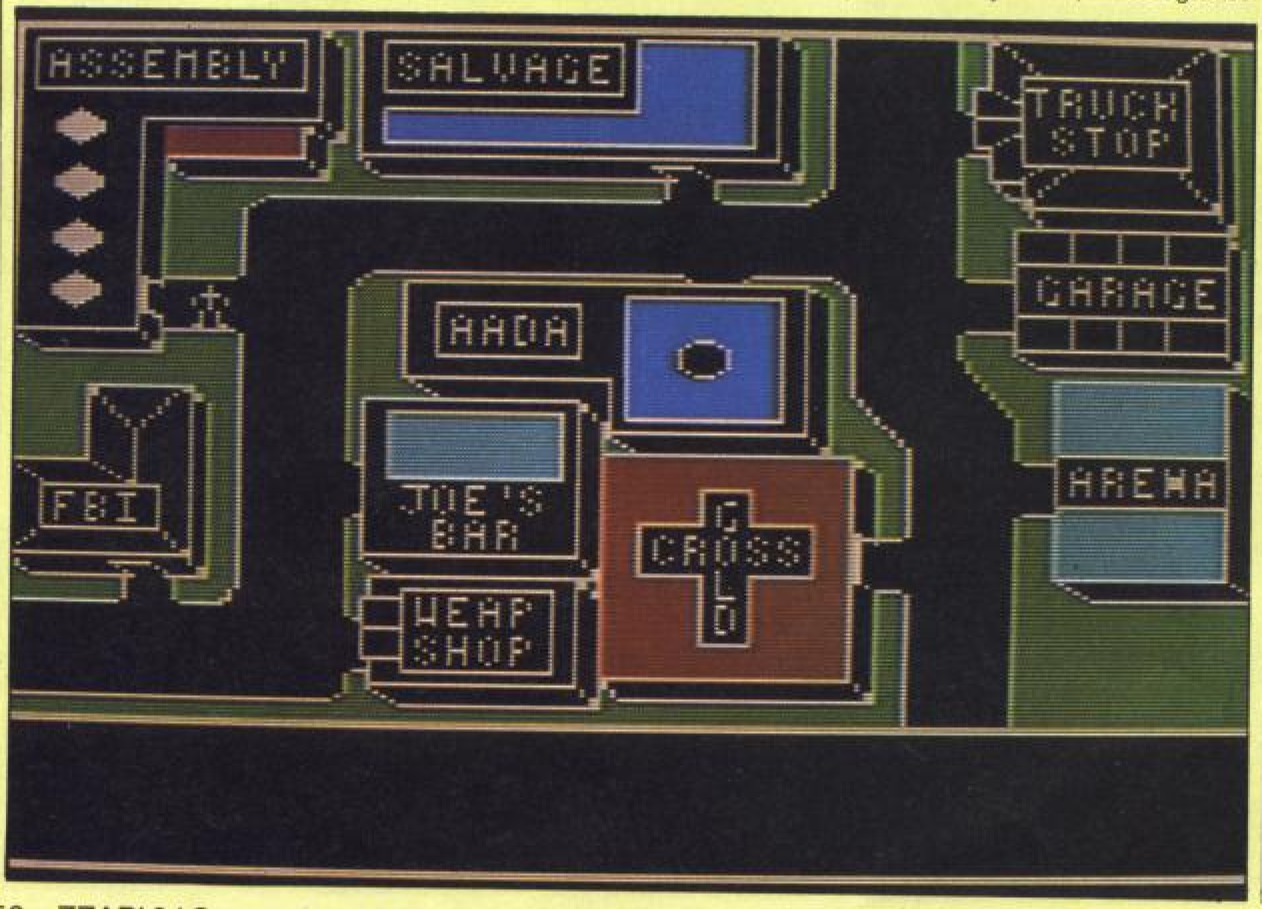
As the game's object is to build the best car you can and win autoduelling championships, the immediate aim is to make money. I found the easiest way to do this is to by-pass all that dangerous and uncertain autoduelling and head by bus for Atlantic City, where you can take part in a very lenient and generous game of Draw Poker! But the proper way to make your first few thousand is to take part in the amateur Night event at the arena. The prize is £1500 dollars and a couple of points of prestige. When you have your own armed and armoured green Mini you can take part in the Division Combats and the highly dangerous City Championships.

The other main way of making money and gaining prestige is to run courier tasks for the AADA. Visiting their buildings offers the player a choice of four different tasks every day. This seems to me one of the most interesting aspects of the game. If your car isn't big enough and your prestige isn't high enough the AADA will have no hesitation in refusing you for an important job.

Most of the loving care in the design of this game has gone into the car specifications. There are seven basic types of body design, four chassis modifications, three kinds of suspension, and four grades of 'power plant' to choose from. All of these affect how much the vehicle can carry, how fast it can go, and how easy it will be to handle. After that, there are tyres, weapons and armour to decide on, and there are 12 weapon types to choose from. It's just a pity that when your armoured tank rolls off the efficient production lines it still looks like a green Mini.

These and other touches of variety (such as the ability to salvage cars you've destroyed and sell the scrap) seem to promise a substantial game. *AutoDuel* does have a feeling of solidity and of things to do and places to go, but there are objections which may be more than superficial. The enemy cars in the amateur night contest are always in exactly the same place every time, in every city. It is depressingly easy to get killed very suddenly, and the only life insurance you can take out is to have a clone made; which is so expensive that it's hardly worth doing until you've built up a substantial fortune. Frustration dominates over enjoyment, and I find it difficult to believe that the gameplay settles down later.

But the potential for expansion in a game which is so difficult to get started in is tantalising. You can own up to eight cars, you can track down top secret missions for the FBI, and you can become king of the arena. But there is no grand object, something which I think all games should have, however excitingly remote it may be. *AutoDuel* is a lonely game.



PRESENTATION 85%
The toolkit is useful for wiring plugs. But having to change the disk round so often is rather boring.

GRAPHICS 30%
Worse than poor, because they defeat the atmosphere.

RULES 84%
Excellent.

AUTHENTICITY 50%
Despite the beautifully detailed car specifications, the game does nothing to conjour up the required atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 70%
Although it's frustratingly difficult to get started, it's easy to spend a long time trying.

OVERALL 70%
Some good points and the promise of lasting play – but the serious drawbacks might become too irritating in the long run.



DESPATCHES

Hello? Is there anybody out there? I hardly expected sackloads of mail in my first month, but you've all had time to put pen to paper by now. Come on! If you want 'Manoeuvres' to be an important part of ZZAP!, then you've got to add your support. That means *you* ! Let's hear your views on anything and everything to do with strategy gaming on the Commodore. I get plenty of mail for 'Frontline Forum' in Crash – and you wouldn't want me to think that Commodore gamers were less interested than Spectrum strategists, would you?

As from next month, space allowing, I shall be publishing a small hints and tips 'sub-column', and I need your strategies and solutions. As from this month, you have the chance to vote in a strategy chart too, so start writing.

COMMIE BASHING

Dear Philippa,
Congratulations on joining ZZAP! Sorry about this, but this letter is one long moan directed against US Gold. I recently bought *Germany 1985*, and frankly I was disgusted with what I read on the cover – 'the mighty bear of the Eastern Bloc, the avaricious Soviet Union strides its way forward to savage the free world, to brutalise and intimidate its peoples.' Of course the game gives you the opportunity to play the well-spoken, clean-shaven, general all-round nice guy NATO Supreme Commander. Succeed, and the world will once more be nice and jolly, people will be happy, birds will sing, the sun will shine . . . get the idea? Fail, and the *bad* guys in the fur hats win (that's the Russians of course), the birds won't sing, and sun won't shine, etc.

US Gold's Tim Chaney defended *Raid Over Moscow* by saying that 'nobody really believes that if they get inside the Kremlin during a nuclear war, they're going to throw a disc that rebounds off a wall to knock out robots arming nuclear weapons.' But *Germany 1985* is, and I quote, 'a realistic simulation.' Does this mean that US Gold really believe this garbage?

On to the actual game itself, and the most important question is, is it worth it? And the answer to that one is a resounding *no* ! I bought the game in a chain store, and I feel that US Gold have taken advantage of the fact that few of these stores provide the game instructions before you actually buy the game. A small disclaimer printed on the instruction sheet informs the poor mug who actually shelled out for the game that 'this product will not save to cassette.' Just what is the point of producing a cassette version like this? A save feature in a wargame is *essential* ! In demonstration mode the game took four hours and 26 minutes to complete. Bearing in mind that the computer thinks much faster than I do, it would probably take at least 12 hours for me to finish the game.

The lack of a cassette save routine renders the game totally unplayable and it should never have been released in this form. I sent a letter to US Gold (Transatlantic Simulations) over a month ago, to which they didn't even have the decency to reply. Their attitude seems to be 'we've got your money so what do we care?' Don't get me wrong – the game concept and implementation is great, but couldn't the disk save routine have been reprogrammed? This begs the question – does anyone at US Gold really care, or are they just a bunch of slick marketing men after a quick buck?

Answers on a postcard please . . .

Gordon Allan, Tain

As I said last month, I've no qualms about wargames as wargames, but I dislike intensely the sort of Commie-mutant-traitor attitude that some of these American simulations adopt. Wargames shouldn't take sides (not politically anyway), And US Gold don't seem to be a very popular organisation – not as far as customer relations go anyway.

PI

SOCIAL COMMENT

Dear Philippa,
In reply to a letter in your first CRASH Frontline Forum, you commented that while computer wargames are good for the solo gamer, two players are better off with board games. This is an issue which I feel should be thrown open to ZZAP! readers, and here is my view on the subject.

I have many excellent boardgames but my playing of them decreased after acquiring a CBM64, and I have hardly touched them since buying a disk drive 16 months ago. The reason is that 95% of my gaming is solo and the computer provides me with an opponent. However, 80% of my social gaming is done with computer games and not over a board. Computer games are easier to set up and can be readily saved for the next session, be it next week or next month – instead of having map and counters laying about, or both sides having to laboriously note unit positions and strengths to set up the board again. Another advantage is that there are no disagreements over rule interpretations. Even in relation to game quality, most software can stand comparison with board games and the computer's number-crunching leaves more time for planning and enjoying instead of searching through charts to see what CRT to use.

The ability of the computer to recreate the fog of war via hidden movement and limited information on the enemy, means that where once my friends and I played 'City-Fight' or 'Task Force' we now play 'Computer Ambush' or 'Grey Seas, Grey Skies' as you no longer have to give information as to where you are searching, and the opposing units can't be occupying the same areas without anyone being aware of it. The social aspect of confrontation over a board is gone, but easier gameplay with little or no loss to the simulation makes up for it.

Jim Harrison, Glasgow

Two-player computer wargaming is something that I personally – as you're right to point out – can't enjoy. Perhaps I'm too hasty in assuming that most other computer wargamers feel the same way. Certainly, I can see that Commodore disk-based games compete much more closely with the boxed wargame than Spectrum cassette-based games – what do others think?

PI

THE NEW ZZAP! STRATEGY CHART

Here's your chance to decide the fate of your favourite strategy games, by voting in the ZZAP! strategy chart. Tell us your favourite five strategy programs, and at the same time enter a draw for £20's worth of software (not necessarily strategic) and a ZZAP! T-Shirt. Five runners-up will also receive a T-Shirt, so get your entry in as quickly as possible.

The following are my five favourite strategy games in order of choice . . .

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2. ....
3. ....
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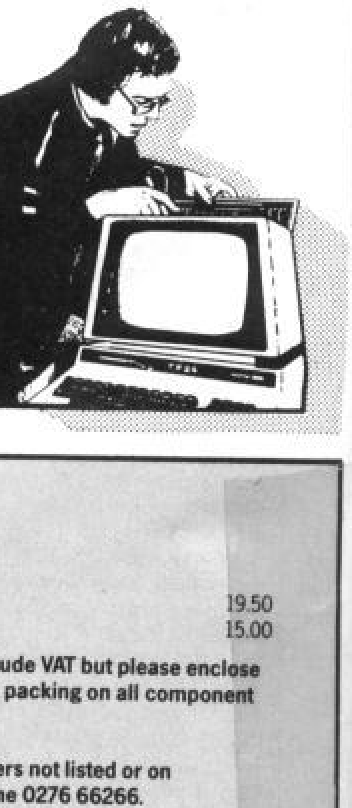
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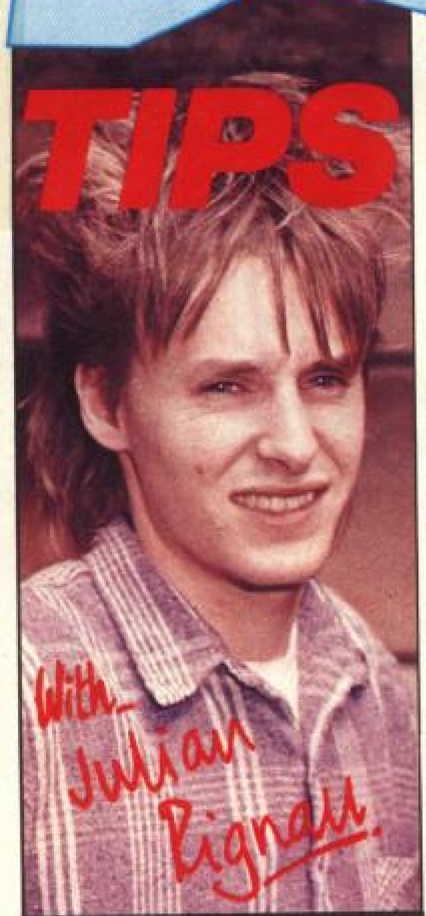
★ **For quotes on computers not listed or on any component, telephone 0276 66266. (Quoting ZAP/097).**

★ **To send us your micro for repair, mail it securely packed, accompanied by cheque, postal order (made out to Verran Micro Maintenance Limited) or quote your Access or Barclaycard number. And to obtain your special discount quote ZAP/097.**

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ZZAP! TIPS



We've spent the last few days in the office playing around with the new generation of games consoles, and it's going to be a tough decision which one I eventually buy. It's funny how the dedicated console has reappeared, especially after the Colecovision, Vectrex and Intellivision disasters – but I suppose that's the way the market is going. What I'm hoping will happen is that once software houses see the arcade perfect conversions on the Nintendo and Sega, they'll realise that there's no point in competing and start to release original software again – after all, that's what computers are best used for. What do you think? Air your views in the ZZAP! RRAP pages and give Lloyd some more work!

Back to the tips. Coming up is a highly useful *Head Over Heels* map, and also one to help all you *The Last Ninjas*, a generous helping of tried and tested POKEs and tips galore – go on, indulge yourself!

BARBARIAN (Palace)

If you're a 128 owner, and would like a bit of a laugh, load side two of this brilliant slice and dice game. When it's loaded, keep the Commodore key depressed and reset the computer using the reset switch. Great eh? Try it a couple of times – and then try playing the game. Thanks to Neil Ellis **and** P Nolan **for that useless, but amusing tip.**

WONDERBOY (Activision)

'Greetings' says Geir Straume **of 2040 Klofta, Norway. 'How would you like to play a full screen version of** *Wonderboy*?**' If you do, load the game, reset the computer and enter the following POKEs.**

POKE 3427,32
POKE 3428,174
POKE 3429,2
POKE 3572,32
POKE 3573,167
POKE 3574,2
POKE 679,141
POKE 680,32
POKE 681,208
POKE 682,141
POKE 683,33
POKE 684,208
POKE 685,96
POKE 686,140
POKE 687,32
POKE 688,208
POKE 689,140
POKE 690,33
POKE 691,208
POKE 692,96

And if you want unlimited lives, enter:

POKE 2676,234
POKE 2677,234
POKE 2678,234

And SYS 2112 **to restart the game with your selected changes. By the way, the full screen effect starts when you've completed round one – so go for it.**

THE SENTINEL (Firebird)

Hands up all those who tried to meet Geoff Crammond's ultimate challenge of getting a meanie on the Sentinel's plinth, and failed. Someone without a raised hand is Conor Hickey **of Rathfarnham, Dublin. This clever chap claims that he completed the challenge in under ten minutes! If you'd like to do the same, follow his instruction:**

First of all select the single sentry landscape 0011 (code 65614978), and absorb all of the trees. When you're certain that you've sucked up every tree, then absorb The Sentinel. Place a tree on his plinth and wait, standing on the nearmost square behind The Sentinel's plinth. When the sentry sees you, it has no choice but to use the tree on the plinth to create a meanie – and there you have it, the ultimate challenge conquered. You are now a complete human being.

ENIGMA FORCE (Beyond)

This ageing sequel to the even more ageing *Shadowfire* **has just been re-released on the** *Best of Beyond* **compilation. So, if you've just bought a copy (or have the original and never got anywhere), the following solution from** Craig Richmond **and** Glen Forrest **of Western Australia might be of interest.**

Before you attempt an escape, explore the base thoroughly and find all the locations so you know where to go – making a map is a pretty good idea. Finally, the following strategy relies on a very **quick start.**

Firstly, take control of SYLK and locate the insectoid queen. When you have achieved this, your team will no longer be attacked by the insectoids. To find her, look around the area immediately surrounding the ammunition room, but be careful, there's a queue of insectoids waiting to come through the locked door of the ammunition room.

When the Queen insectoid has been located, choose one of the remaining crew members (preferably not MAUL the Transporter as his lack of speed tends to cause problems). Use this character to get the RED KEY CARD which is found two rooms due south from the starting point. Get this key, and return to your starting location, then head left and keep going along this corridor until you find a locked door. Activate the card now.

Take control of the remaining character, either ZARK or SEVRINA, and make your way straight to the room where the enemies are produced – don't forget to take all the power capsules and ammunition you can find on the way, and don't stop to fight either (and make sure you're wrapped nice and warm with a woolly scarf). When you get there, wait on the far left of the room, inside the door (a character can't be shot while in this position). A GREEN KEY CARD is located nearby – this should be collected when there are no reptiloids in the room.

If you wait in the room long enough the reptiloids won't be able to get out, which means that there's a continual build-up of the number of insectoids and a decrease in the number of reptiloids. The best thing to do is keep stepping in and out of the room and activating a power capsule if energy gets low. After a while, there's a backlog of insectoids waiting to get into the room you are in. This is when you leave the room – whether you have the green key or not.

The next task to find GENERAL ZOFF and kill him. He's usually near to your current location. When you have killed him, take the PURPLE KEY CARD that's left behind.

Go back to the room that you'd been waiting in before, and help kill any remaining reptiloids. Collect the GREEN KEY CARD if you do not already have it and leave through the south door. Activate the GREEN KEY CARD, and go through the door. Activate the PURPLE KEY CARD that you got from GENERAL ZOFF to unlock the spaceship door.

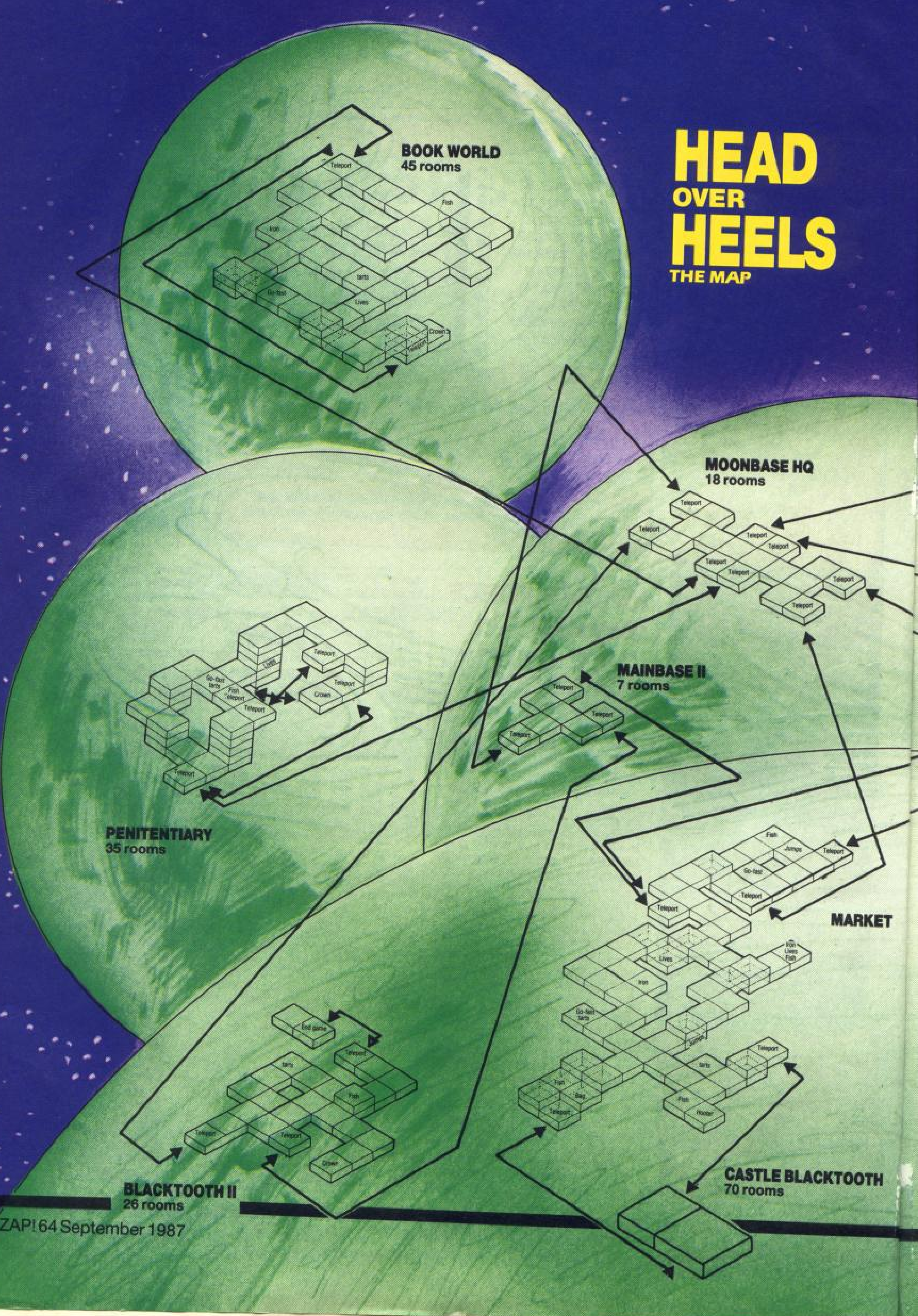
Take all other characters to the room leading to the spaceship and then take them through the door.

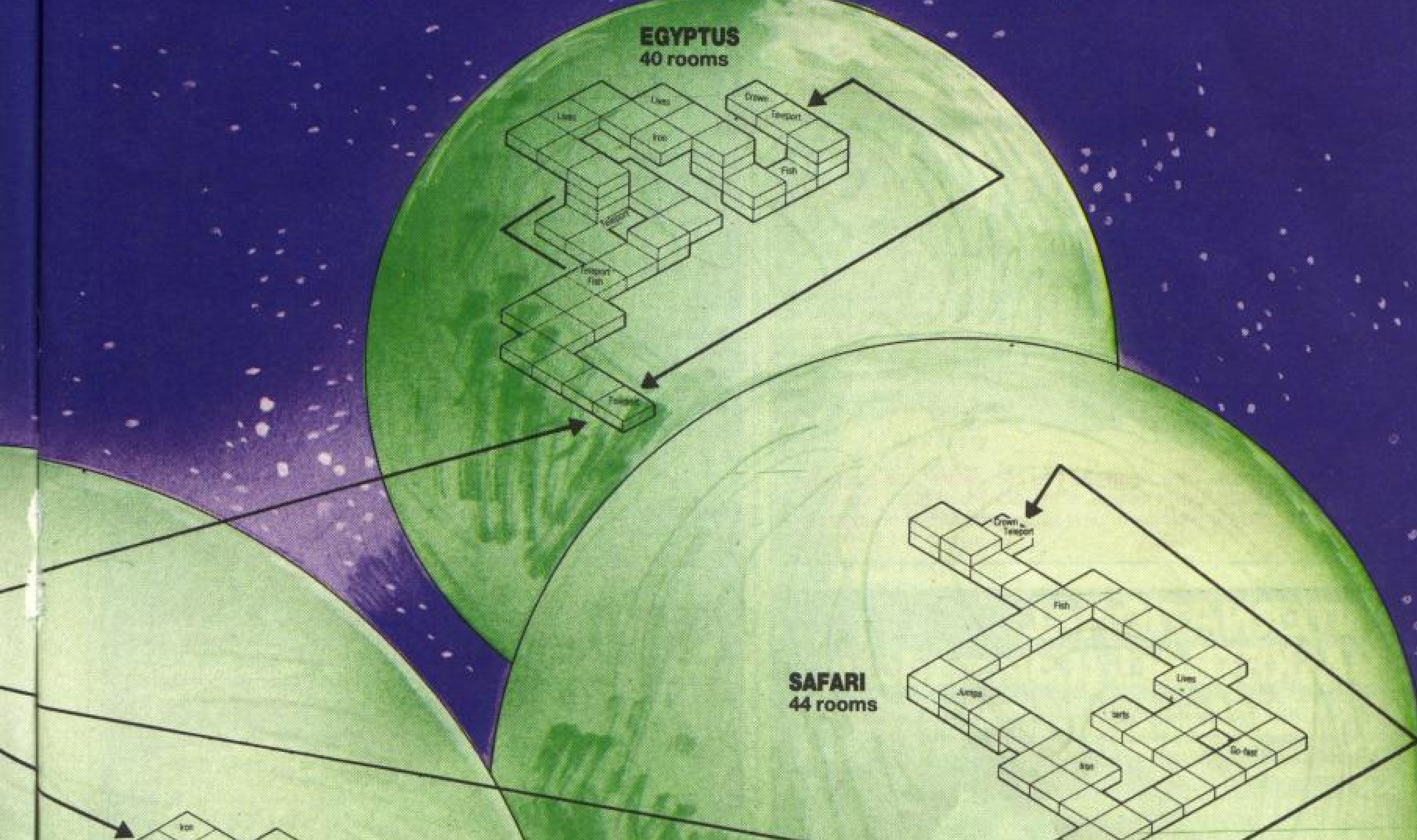
Say 'thank goodness for that, I've finished it' and look at the pretty picture on the screen to your heart's content.



▶

HEAD OVER HEELS
THE MAP





HEAD OVER HEELS (Ocean)

This is such a playable and rewarding game, unlimited lives almost seem an insult. Still, if you're in need of a helping hand, just type the following Zoltan Kelemen listing and RUN it to have unlimited Heads and Heels at your disposal.

```
3 FOR I=53229 TO 53256:READ A:POKE I,
A:C=C+A:NEXT I:IF C=3630 THEN SYS 53229
4 PRINT"ERROR IN DATA!!"
5 DATA 198, 157, 169, 0, 162, 1, 168, 32, 186, 255,
32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255, 169, 208, 141, 146
6 DATA 4, 96, 206, 154, 122, 76, 3, 1
```



I, BALL (Firebird)

Yeti and Woody from Aylesbury, Bucks are a couple of completely looney hackers who've decided to send in their POKEs for this strange combination of ballplay, racing and shooting. First of all, load the game so that you can enter any of the following: POKE 21916,234 (to stop the timer ticking down), POKE 20669,234:POKE 20670,234 (for infinite balls), POKE 18133,255 (for big balls), or POKE 18729,234:18730,234 (for 'impossiball' mode!!??).

Then enter the following to activate 'strange and freaky' features throughout the game . . .

```
POKE 28620,07
POKE 28621,15
POKE 28622,01
POKE 28623,20
POKE 28624,15
POKE 28625,09
POKE 28626,04
POKE 28627,00
```

After you've made your changes you can restart the game by typing SYS 27933. Don't use all of the cheats at the same time as the poor old Commodore can't cope with all the changes at once.

INTERNATIONAL BASKETBALL (Commodore)

What about this one! Get this classic sports simulation out of the cupboard, blow the dust off it and sling it into your computer. Type LOAD and press play on tape. When the READY prompt appears, type . . .

POKE 1011,248:POKE 1012,252:RUN

To load the next bit. When the computer resets, enter . . .

POKE 38170,0:SYS 32384 (RETURN)

For a faster and infinitely more playable game! Pretty neat eh?

LEVIATHAN (English Software)

Unlimited lives for this pretty, but virtually unplayable diagonally scrolling shoot 'em up are certainly welcome – so even more thanks to Jim Blackler for sending in this listing. Simply type in the listing and RUN it to load the program with billions and billions of spaceships.

```
10 FOR A=608 TO 616:READ Z:POKE A,Z:NEXT:SYS
62806:POKE 1671,145:POKE 1676,243
20 DATA 32, 0, 4, 169, 165, 141, 40, 178, 96
```

SPACE DOUBT (CRL)

For some unknown reason we never got round to reviewing this strange little arcade adventure. Oh well, one of life's little mysteries I suppose. If you happened to have bought the program on spec and require unlimited lives for it, just type in and RUN the following Jim Blackler listing.

```
10 FOR A=2304 TO 2327:READ Z:POKE
A,Z:NEXT:SYS 62806:POKE 1014,9:DATA 169, 13
20 DATA 141, 39, 17, 169, 9, 141, 40, 17, 76, 0, 16,
169, 165, 141, 67, 110, 141, 217, 107, 76, 0, 3
```

GAUNTLET (US Gold)

Pay attention all you Wizards, Elves, Valkyries and Warriors – are the dungeon's denizens giving you grief? Is your energy running out before you can get anywhere? Fear no more – Wizard-in-Chief, Jim Blackler has concocted a special listing which, when typed in and RUN before loading, gives unlimited energy to each player.

```
10 FOR A=276 TO 300:READ Z:POKE A,Z:NEXT:SYS
62806:POKE 1046,240
20 DATA 162, 0, 142, 41, 186, 142, 60, 160, 142, 129,
189, 162, 71
30 DATA 142, 84, 173, 142, 125, 198, 142, 180, 196,
76, 20, 9
```

DEEPER DUNGEONS (US Gold)

Jim Blackler has also devised an unlimited energy listing for those who want to explore the depths of the *Deeper Dungeons*. Simply insert the tape into the Commodore, type in the following listing, RUN it and press play to load the game with tireless characters.

```
10 FOR A=276 TO 300:READ Z:POKE A,Z:NEXT:SYS
62806:POKE 1046,240
20 DATA 162, 0, 142, 194, 157, 142, 19, 171, 142, 34,
184, 142, 160
30 DATA 187, 162, 71, 142, 203, 194, 142, 135, 196,
76, 20, 9
```

TERRA COGNITA (Code Masters)

If you want infinite lives for this pretty naff vertically scrolling shoot 'em up, simply put the tape into the C2N and type POKE 43,255:LOAD (RETURN) to load the first part. When the computer resets, enter . . .

POKE 43,1 (RETURN)
85 POKE 29253,243 (RETURN)
RUN (RETURN)

. . . to load the rest of the game with with infinite lives. Once again many thanks to Lancaster's Jim Blackler.

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)

Who wants to be a billionaire? If only this POKE would work on my bank balance – it gives unlimited money! However, it does work on any budding Alleykatter's, and therefore allows any race to be entered from the start. Just type in the listing and RUN it to enter the world of the mega-rich. Once again thanks to Jim Blackler.

```
10 FOR A=65280 TO 65321:READ Z:POKE
A,Z:NEXT:SYS 62806:POKE 1013,255
20 DATA 169, 13, 141, 42, 225, 169, 255, 141, 43, 225,
76, 0, 224, 169
30 DATA 165, 141, 11, 17, 141, 17, 17, 169, 0, 141,
127, 16, 141, 129, 16
40 DATA 169, 240, 141, 248, 15, 169, 34, 141, 249,
15, 76, 208, 207
```

OLLO PACK (Bug Byte)

Here are a couple of unlimited lives POKEs for this back to back pair of Bug Byte budget blasters, again courtesy of the industrious Jim Blackler.

OLLO I

Insert the relevant cassette into the datacorder, type in the following line and press play on tape . . .

SYS 62806:POKE 1001,248:POKE 1002,252 (RETURN)

When the computer resets, type . . .

POKE 52868,248:POKE 52869,252:SYS 52805 (RETURN)

And when the computer resets again, type . . .

POKE 9701,173:SYS 9984 (RETURN)

. . . to load and run the rest of the game with unlimited lives.

OLLO II

Insert relevant cassette into the datacorder, type in the following line and press play on tape.

SYS 62806:POKE 1001,248:POKE 1002,252 (RETURN)

When the computer resets, type . . .

POKE 52880,248:POKE 52881,252:SYS 53023 (RETURN)

And when the computer resets again, type . . .

POKE 22640,173:POKE 22704,173:POKE 23568,173:SYS 23296 (RETURN)

To load and run the rest of the game with unlimited lives.

ROGUE TROOPER (Piranha)

Good old Joe 90 (surely not the puppet) is here to help this 2000AD character bring the traitor to justice. Load the program, start a game and reset the computer so that you can enter the following POKEs . . .

POKE 17429,234
POKE 17430,234
POKE 17431,234

for infinite energy, and . . .

POKE 21603,234
POKE 21604,234
POKE 21605,234

for infinite ammo. When you've typed in the energy and/or ammo POKEs, enter the following line . . .

FOR A=8240 TO 8258:POKE A,234:NEXT (RETURN)

Restart the program by typing SYS 8195

180 (Mastertronic)

If you want to copy John Lowe's feat of a nine dart finish – every time – hold down the right hand shift key and the space bar together. Release them both at the same time and the hand stops moving, enabling you to line up the dart for a perfect throw! Thanks to Kevin Featley of St Peters, Broadstairs for that arrow-lobbing tip.

SKATEROCK (Bubble Bus)

Are you being wiped out, or are just wimping out? Fear no more, for help is at hand courtesy of Channel 8 of the Silicon Cracking Service. Just load the game and reset the computer, type in SYS 2305 (RETURN) and reset the computer again. Type POKE 2513,250 (RETURN) and then SYS 2304 (RETURN) to restart the game with 250 extra lives. Happy skating.

KAT TRAP (Streetwise)

If you're having trouble kicking those rotten Cat Men off our lovely planet, try out this Mick Mills and Al listing – the binary equivalent of catnip. Simply type and RUN the listing and go and kick ass!

```
3 FOR I= 4077 TO 4106:READ A:POKE
I,A:C=C+A:NEXT I:IF C=3666 THEN SYS 4077
4 PRINT "ERROR IN DATA!!"
5 DATA 198, 157, 169, 0, 162, 1, 168, 32, 186, 255,
32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255, 169, 73, 141, 179, 3
6 DATA 96, 169, 36, 141, 91, 85, 76, 67, 36
```

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK (Martech)

Hackin' an' slayin' those evil Terminator fanatics is made all the more enjoyable when Nemesis has unlimited energy, fireballs and ammo! Now you can spit 'n' blast to your heart's content (or at least until the tea's ready). Don't forget though, that Nemesis cannot access his sword if he has unlimited bullets, so choose when prompted – hack or blast, so to speak. Just type in the listing, RUN it and follow the on-screen instructions. More thanks to Mick Mills and Al.

```
10 L=49152
20 FOR X=1 TO 14:T=0
30 FOR Y=1 TO 8
40 READ A:POKE L,A
50 L=L+1:T=T+A
60 NEXT
70 READ C:IF T=C THEN 90
80 PRINT"ERROR IN LINE"*10+90:END
90 NEXT
94 GOSUB 300
95 PRINT"SYS 49152 TO LOAD AND RUN"
99 END
100 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168, 32, 186, 255, 169, 1150
110 DATA 0, 32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255, 169, 1145
120 DATA 26, 141, 150, 3, 169, 192, 141, 151, 973
130 DATA 3, 96, 169, 76, 141, 91, 56, 169, 801
140 DATA 44, 141, 92, 56, 169, 192, 141, 93, 928
150 DATA 56, 76, 25, 8, 162, 49, 189, 58, 623
160 DATA 192, 157, 128, 8, 202, 16, 247, 76, 1026
170 DATA 128, 8, 32, 181, 2, 32, 181, 2, 566
180 DATA 32, 181, 2, 169, 0, 141, 17, 143, 685
190 DATA 169, 0, 141, 116, 140, 169, 76, 141, 952
200 DATA 189, 138, 141, 48, 139, 169, 217, 141, 1182
210 DATA 190, 138, 169, 138, 141, 191, 138, 169,
1274
220 DATA 52, 141, 49, 139, 169, 139, 141, 50, 880
230 DATA 139, 76, 0, 128, 65, 76, 77, 77, 638
300 REM
310 PRINT"DO YOU WANT INFINITE AMMO (Y/
N)?";
320 GET A$:IF A$<>"Y"AND A$<>"N"THEN 320
330 IF A$="N"THEN POKE 49220,1
340 PRINT A$:RETURN
```

METROCROSS (US Gold)

As I'm typing this, Glenys (who's helping me test the listings) is whizzing through level after level with the help of unlimited time! If you fancy doing the same, simply type in the listing and RUN it. Thanks to Zoltan Kelemen of Tyreso, Sweden.

By the way, I've just been informed that the game ends after completion of level 24, with no congratulatory screen. What a waste of time!

```
3 FOR I=512 TO 543:READ A:POKE I,
A:C=C+A:NEXT I:IF C=3754 THEN SYS 520
4 PRINT"ERROR IN DATA!!"
5 DATA 169, 96, 141, 185, 52, 76, 167, 2, 198, 157,
169, 0, 162, 1, 168, 32, 186, 255, 32, 189, 255
6 DATA 32, 213, 255, 169, 0, 141, 144, 8, 76, 16, 8
```

THE LAST NINJA (System 3)

Thanks to all 28 of you who've sent in tips for this brilliant oriental arcade adventure – they've all been combined to produce the following complete (ish) solution.

A lot of you have been having problems getting through *The Last Ninja*, and have rang the ZZAP! offices for help. Please don't – write in if you require help, and I'll see what I can do. Much as we'd like to, I'm afraid we just haven't the time to spend all day helping people out over the phone.

LEVEL ONE

The most important thing is to collect all of the objects and weapons – a sword, numchukas, smoke bomb, shuriken, pouch, key and apple are the objects to look out for.

When all the items have been collected, it's time to put the Dragon to sleep – that's the large lizard who frazzles the poor Ninja every time he tries to go past. To put paid to his pyromaniacy, simply access the smoke bomb and lob it in the dragon's general direction. When the scaly blowtorch slumps to the floor, it can be safely passed.

LEVEL TWO

Firstly collect the claw at the lion's foot which is used to climb the cliff – hold nothing but the claw and push Ninja against the cliff face. Watch out for the crevasses – it takes a bit of practice to jump these safely.

When you reach the wall, hold only the claw and walk backwards until the black-swathed hero clambers down like a monkey. Next, find and collect the glove and staff. To pass the fire-breathing statue at the end of the level, use the Ninja magic found near the glove. When the Ninja flashes, it's safe to go past.

LEVEL THREE

Get the talisman from around the statue's neck and find and collect the rose – but don't forget to use the glove, otherwise the Ninja hurts his hand and dies. When the Ninja comes to a large yellow statue, hold nothing but the talisman and pray.

LEVEL FOUR

There are two items on this level – the rope, which is needed to climb the step ladder out, and an apple. It *is* possible to pass the spider, but it's best to to use the map to find an alternate route. Use the staff (it has a longer reach) to hit the Skeletons. When the ladder is located, stand next to the lowermost rungs and use the rope to escape.

LEVEL FIVE

Collect the apple and enter the palace using the key. Carry on walking through the palace until the large nail-wielding statue is found. Hold nothing and edge up against it. Keep moving right and forwards (very slowly) until the Ninja passes it. Don't casually stroll past, as the statue will kill you. The entrance to the stairway is protected by a disintegration spell, so a little Ninja magic has to be collected from a nearby boiling pot. When the last Ninja turns green, he can enter the stairway to . . .

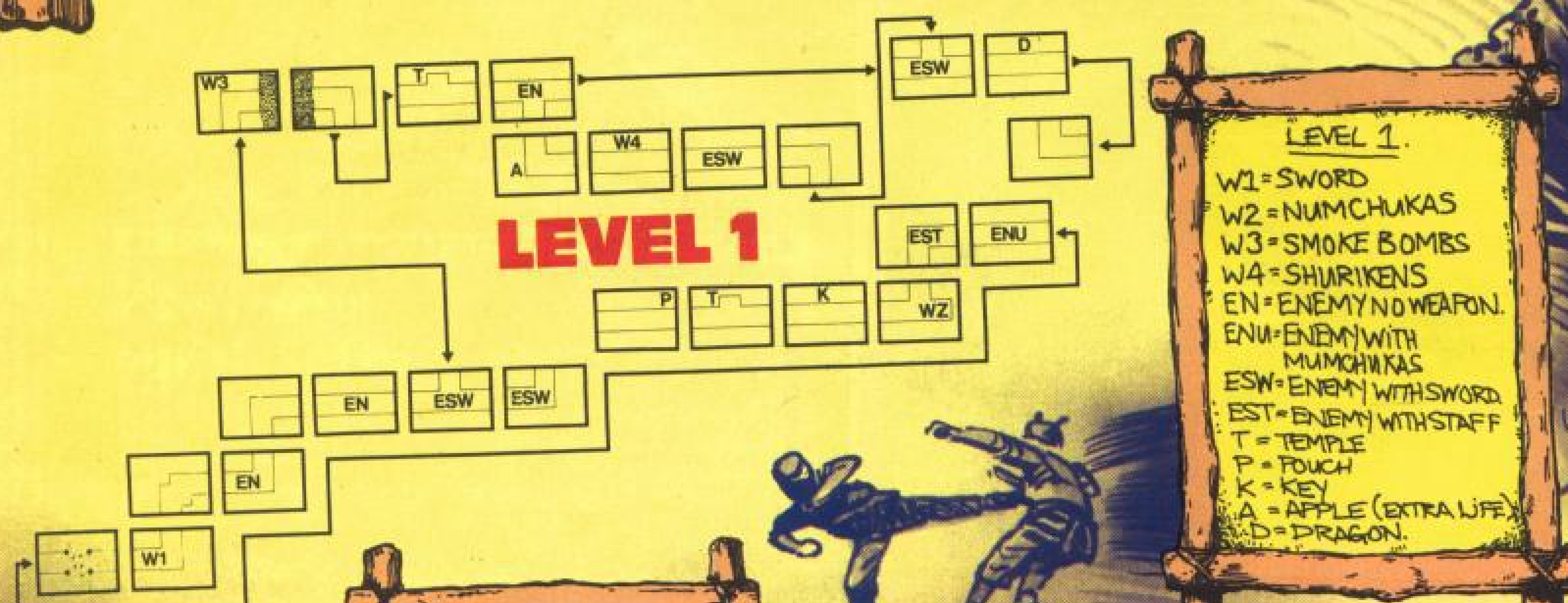
LEVEL SIX

The final level is the best! First, find the telescope and look through it for a very pretty effect, then get back to the action. Collect the sleeping potion and find the room with many vases. Hold the rose and push against the final vase to open up a secret door.

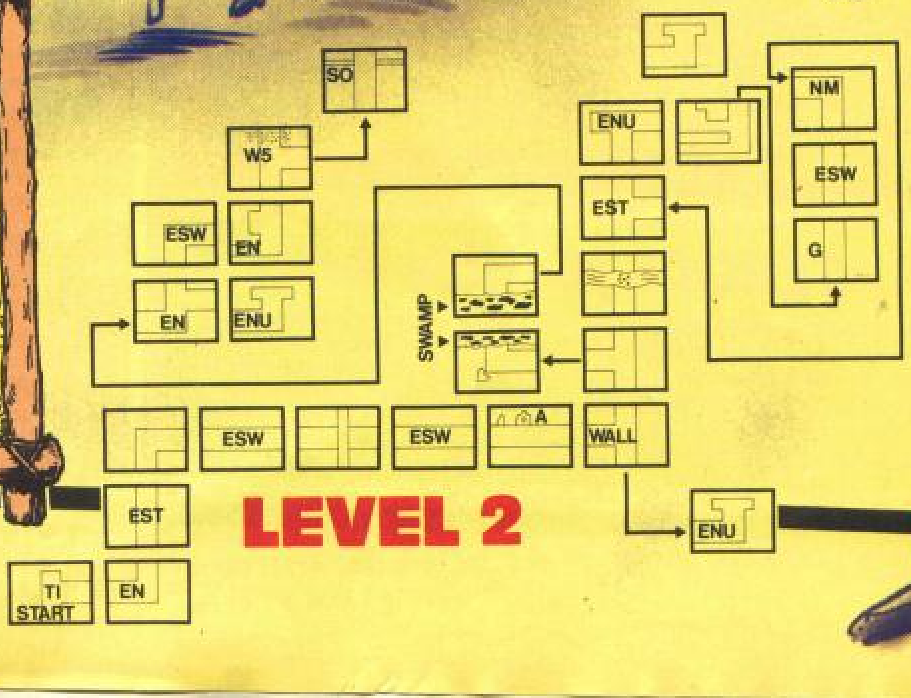
Continue down the passageway until the giant dog is encountered. Hold only the potion, move towards the dog and throw it when it attacks. A successful hit sees the dog collapse to the ground. If the bomb misses, beat a hasty retreat, re-enter the room and try again.

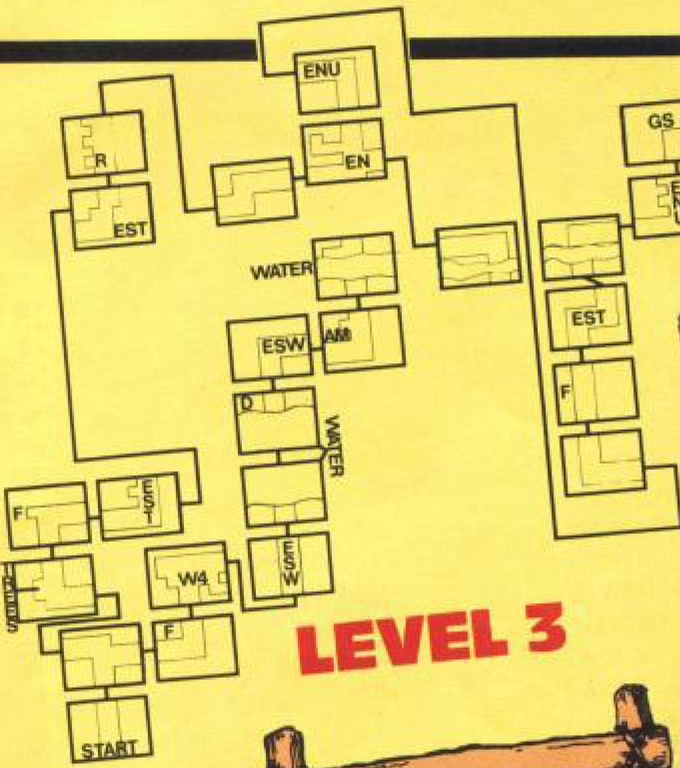
The next hazard is the large statue with the bow and arrow. To pass safely, use the magic blood found on the floor (it looks like two misplaced pixels.)

Continue until you meet the heavily armed Shogun. Use the staff, enter the room, bash the guard once and exit. Keep on doing this until he lies dead – the Ninja glows and is transported to a mystery location where lieth the scrolls. Jump onto the central square in the centre of the room, use the pouch and pick up the scrolls. Watch the disappointing ending screen, and switch off the computer . . .









LEVEL 3

LEVEL 3.

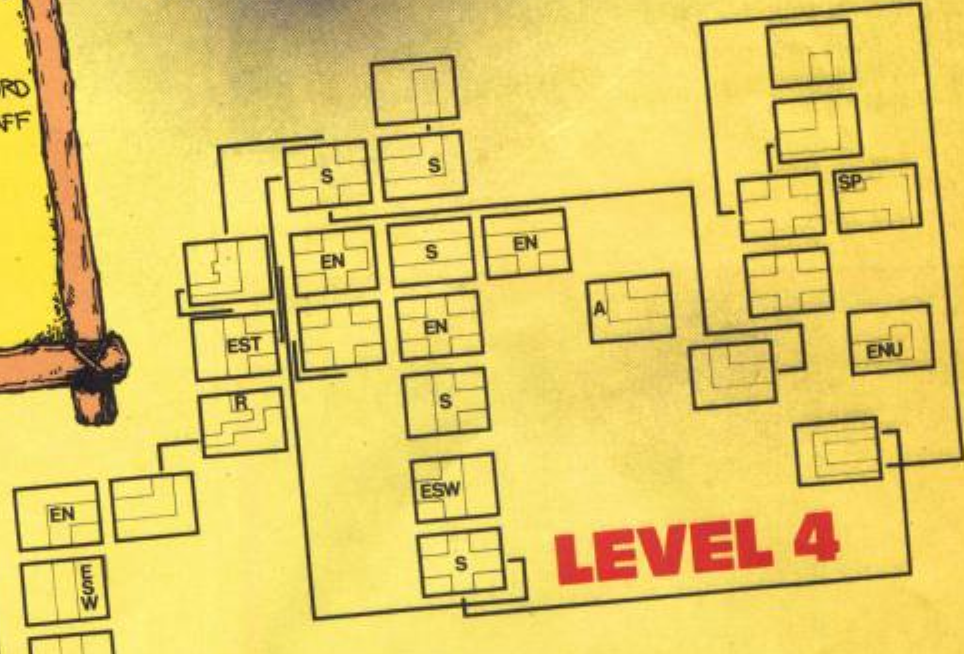
W4 = SHURIKENS
EN = ENEMY NO WEAPON
ENU = ENEMY WITH NUCHUKAS
ESW = ENEMY WITH SWORD
EST = ENEMY WITH STAFF
F = FOUNTAIN
A = APPLE
D = DRAGON
R = ROSE
AM = AMULET
GS = GOLDEN STATUE



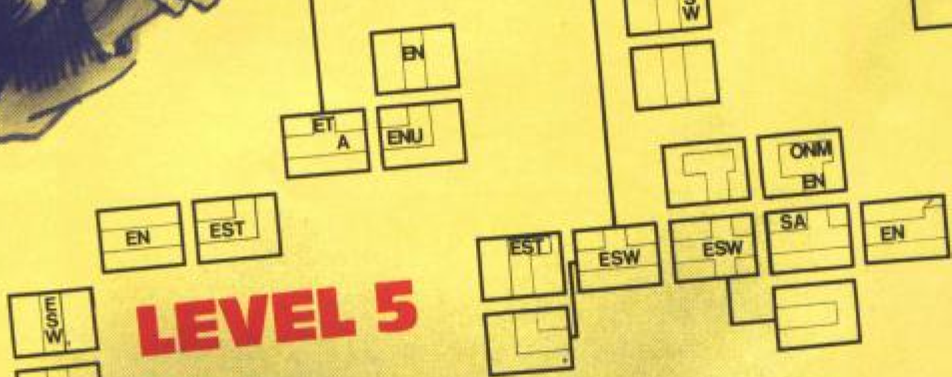
LEVEL 4.

EN = ENEMY NO WEAPON
ENU = ENEMY WITH NUCHUKAS
ESW = ENEMY WITH SWORD
EST = ENEMY WITH STAFF
A = APPLE
S = SKELETON.
SP = SPIDER
R = ROPE.





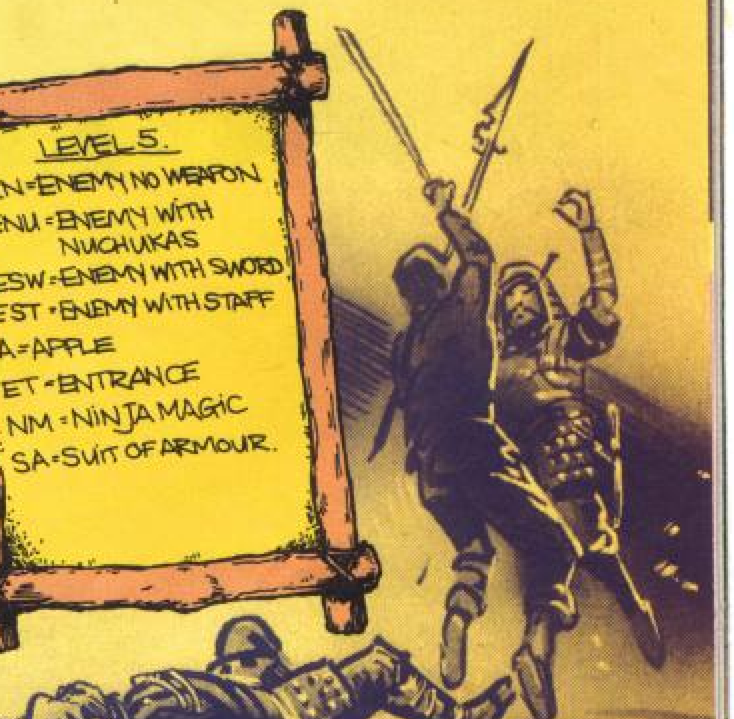
LEVEL 4

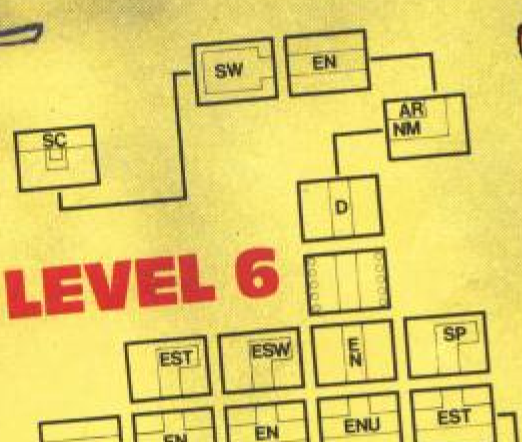


LEVEL 5

LEVEL 5.

EN = ENEMY NO WEAPON
ENU = ENEMY WITH NUCHUKAS
ESW = ENEMY WITH SWORD
EST = ENEMY WITH STAFF
A = APPLE
ET = ENTRANCE
NM = NINJA MAGIC
SA = SUIT OF ARMOUR.





LEVEL 6

LEVEL 6.

EN = ENEMY NO WEAPON.
ENU = ENEMY WITH NUCHUKAS
ESW = ENEMY WITH SWORD
EST = ENEMY WITH STAFF
SP = SLEEPING POTION
D = DOG
NM = NINJA MAGIC
AR = ARCHER
SW = SAMURI WARRIOR
SC = SCROLL.

COMPILED BY DALE SOMERSET

GUNSTAR (Firebird)

Whacky pseudonyms seem to be the 'in' thing this month – here are a couple of POKEs from Droid of the Danish Circle. These give unlimited boredom – sorry, I mean lives. Load the game as normal, reset the computer and enter the following two lines . . .

```
FOR A=8367 TO 8372:POKE A,234:NEXT (RETURN)
FOR A=8387 TO 8388:POKE A,234:NEXT (RETURN)
```

URIDIUM PLUS (Hewson)

This follow-up to Uridium is great, although a little on the difficult side. If you've never seen the later levels, try out this excellent unlimited lives listing to make your sight-seeing tour that little bit easier. All you have to do is type in and RUN this Jim Blackler listing.

```
10 FOR A=49152 TO 49164:READ Z:POKE
A,Z:NEXT:SYS 62806:POKE 1013,192
20 DATA 169, 41, 141, 186, 224, 169, 14, 141, 187,
224, 76, 0, 224
```



HADES NEBULA (Nexus)

Roger Ramjet of the Hitchin Cracking Service has mustered up a POKE that gives 255 lives at the start of a game – useful to say the least. Just load the program, reset the computer and enter FOKE 2279,255. To restart, enter SYS2198. The screen is all mucked up at first, so press F7 to get back to the title screen, then press the fire button to restart properly.

If you're one of those who haven't got a reset switch, use Zoltan Kelemen's easy-to-enter listing instead. Type and RUN it to load the program with unlimited lives.

```
3 FOR I=512 TO 567:READ A:POKE
I,A:C=C+A:NEXT I:IF C=5762 THEN SYS 525
4 PRINT"ERROR IN DATA"
5 DATA 169, 150, 141, 9, 26, 169, 71, 141, 10, 26, 76,
0, 1, 169, 45, 141, 40, 3, 169, 2, 141, 41, 3
6 DATA 198, 157, 169, 0, 162, 1, 168, 32, 186, 255,
32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255, 14, 217, 2, 76, 81, 3
7 DATA 169, 49, 141, 159, 2, 169, 234, 141, 160, 2, 96
```

RUPERT AND THE TOYMAKER'S PARTY (Bug Byte)

Rupert's unlimited! He most certainly is, especially when you type in and Run this Mick Mills and Al listing.

```
10 L=52992
20 FOR X=1 TO 11:T=0
30 FOR Y=1 TO 8
40 READ A:POKE L,A
50 L=L1:T=T+A
60 NEXT
70 READ C:IF T=C THEN 90
80 PRINT"ERROR IN LINE"X*10+90:END
90 NEXT
95 PRINT"SYS 52992 TO LOAD AND RUN"
100 DATA 169, 0, 133, 147, 133, 144, 32, 208, 966
110 DATA 247, 32, 23, 248, 32, 44, 247, 169, 1042
120 DATA 159, 133, 193, 169, 18, 133, 194, 169, 1168
130 DATA 192, 133, 174, 169, 19, 133, 175, 32, 1027
140 DATA 210, 245, 32, 74, 248, 162, 48, 189, 1208
150 DATA 0, 19, 157, 0, 3, 232, 208, 247, 866
160 DATA 169, 102, 141, 71, 3, 169, 4, 141, 800
170 DATA 164, 3, 32, 213, 255, 32, 213, 255, 1167
180 DATA 32, 213, 255, 32, 213, 255, 169, 169, 1338
190 DATA 141, 78, 40, 169, 0, 141, 79, 40, 688
200 DATA 169, 234, 141, 80, 40, 76, 224, 35, 999
```

MAG MAX (Imagine)

Unlimited lives for this disappointing arcade conversion are up for grabs – take 'em or leave 'em. Just type in the listing, RUN it and give those aliens hell. Once again thanks to Zoltan Kelemen.

```
3 FOR I=512 TO 533:READ A:POKE
I,A:C=C+A:NEXT I
4 FOR I=820 TO 825:READ A:POKE
I,A:C=C+A:NEXT I: IF C=3576 THEN SYS 512
5 PRINT"ERROR IN DATA"
6 DATA 198, 157, 169, 0, 162, 1, 168, 32, 186, 255,
32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255, 169, 196, 141, 199
7 DATA 3, 96, 78, 57, 47, 76, 207, 3
```

MARBLE MADNESS (Ariolasoft)

I was really disappointed with the 64 conversion of *Marble Madness* – the original arcade game is such a classic. If you'd like to play it again, but this time skip levels and save yourself a bit of time, just follow the instructions from Tim and Ian Fraser of Ruislip, Middx.

Type LOAD (NOT SHIFT/RUNSTOP). When the READY prompt appears, type POKE 1011,248:POKE 1012,252:RUN to load the rest of the program. When the cursor appears again, type POKE 2066,(1-6) depending on the level you wish to start on, and SYS 49152 to start.

I think it's about time I called it a day. Thanks to everyone who's sent in tips this month, especially Mick Mills and Al, who are getting a £20 software voucher for their troubles. Jim Blackler also deserves special mention for his prolific POKEing – well done Jim, I hope your fingers have cooled down by now. If you have tips, maps, POKEs, or anything else you think other readers might find interesting, send them in to ZZAP! TIPS, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB. See you in four weeks.

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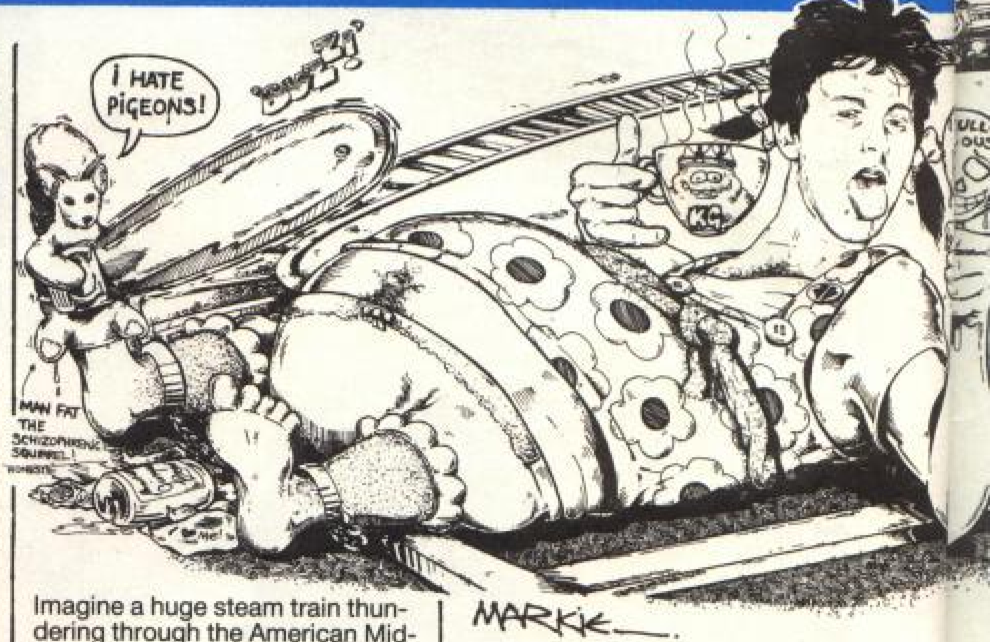
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GARY LIDDON'S TEC

Tarby (for it is he): Our next guest is a very talented and *funny* young man who I'm sure you'll know very well. Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together to give a very warm welcome your friend and mine, yes it's Gary Liddon and his *funny* stories from the technical world. Take it away Gaz!

Gaz: Thanks Tarby, it's nice to be in town with you too (winks a knowing wink). Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear, what a week I've had this week, gor blimey. My wife, oh dear. My wife's so fat that she needs to go on a diet! (Crowd go wild with laughs) Oh dear, my wife, she's so fat that . . . oh dear, she's soooo fat that I make fun of her! (Geriatrics go berserk with giggles) My wife is sooooooooo hugely enormously grossly and unfeasibly fat that she doesn't exist at all! (the world goes mad with hilarity and chuckles, everyone is happy and there is no more war)

*Did that work? Do newly created images now dance wildly across your imagination? Do Liddon, Tarby and the Audience **really** exist or has the obvious now become painfully apparent? Has self reference shattered the rapport we may have had and forced you into the realisation that symbol-splattered paper is all there ever was. I doubt it, anything created by this text was created by you and isn't going to be destroyed by pointing out the trick that did it. It's your interpretation of these characters that makes worlds, all the writer does is light a fuse. Maybe **you** should be paid £2,000 a page instead of me.*



CARRY ON INTERRUPTING

Welcome again to yet another non-stop knockabout farce of fun. To kick of here's an interesting letter from Billy Irving complaining that there isn't enough Football on television . . .

BILLY IRVING ESQ,
123, SCOTCH BROTH AVE,
HAGGISTOWN,
JOCKVILLE,
ARBROATH,
KILTLAND.

Dear Gary,
Congratulations on a brilliant column. The border trick was great, I have been programming in machine code for about a year with mixed success. One thing I find very difficult to do is smooth scrolling, especially only a part of the screen. I realise this involves raster interrupts which I am just beginning to get the hang of, so could you please tell me how to scroll a part of the screen while leaving the rest static. Anyway keep up the good work. It's the best column in ZZAP! (apart from Manoeuvres).

Yours Hopefully
Billy Irving, Arbroath

It's seems pretty obvious to me from that last line, that Billy is Philippa's little brother – still, on with the show. Because all of the stuff that I was sent to review this month was useless rubbish, I'm using this month's column to bring you a guide to raster interrupts on the C64. So all the people who know how to do raster interrupts, and all the people who're not interested in machine code can go and read the Terminal Man or play 'spot the margin characters' or something . . .

Imagine a huge steam train thundering through the American Mid-West at a million miles an hour. This train represents the Commodore 6510 executing machine code at a million cycles a second, pretty neat eh? So this train is going very fast when all of a sudden Shirley Temple leaps out in front of the speeding train and says 'STOP'. Sweet little Shirley, butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, the train can't run her down so it stops. Shirls belts out 'On The Good Ship Lollipop', hops off the tracks and the train continues in its mega speed journey.

Clever writing no. Pertinent metaphor yes. Shirley's role in this tense drama is allegorical to a 6510 interrupt. When the interrupt line is pulled low (Shirley shouting 'STOP') the 6510 stops its execution and jumps off to execute a totally different bit of code pointed to by the INTERRUPT VECTORS (That's where our Shirl skips onto the tracks and croons OTGSL, the song singing representing the separate subroutine). Having finished, the processor resumes the task it was previously executing.

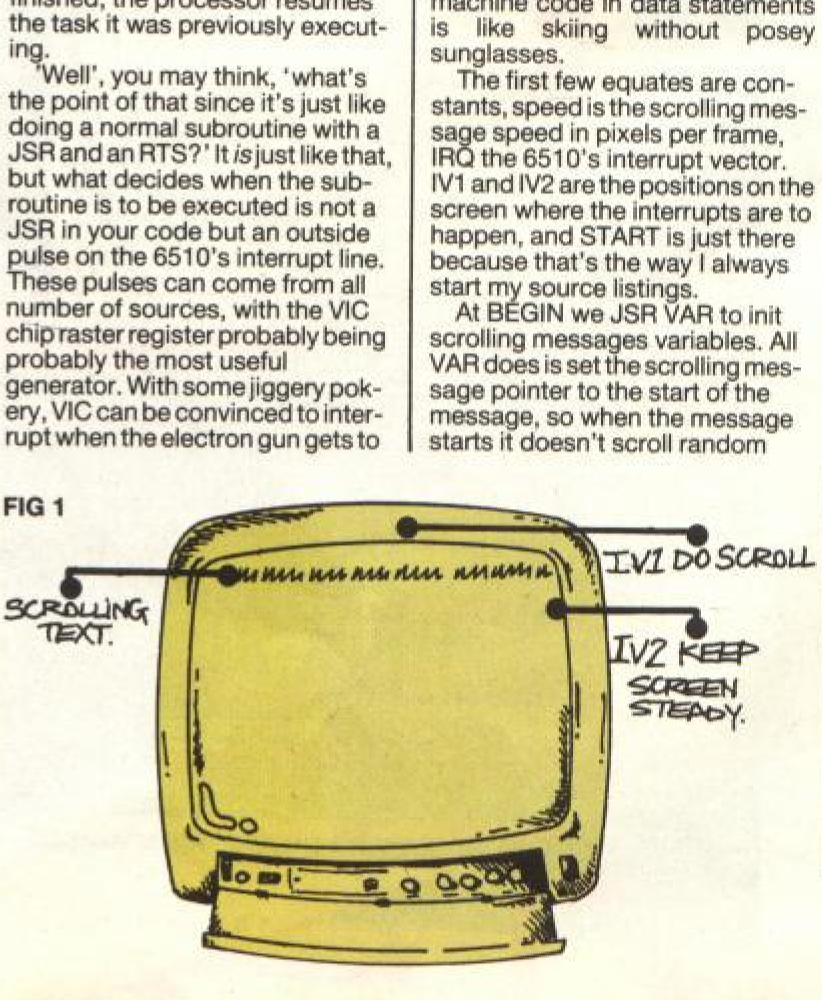
'Well', you may think, 'what's the point of that since it's just like doing a normal subroutine with a JSR and an RTS?' It *is* just like that, but what decides when the subroutine is to be executed is not a JSR in your code but an outside pulse on the 6510's interrupt line. These pulses can come from all number of sources, with the VIC chip raster register probably being probably the most useful generator. With some jiggery pokery, VIC can be convinced to interrupt when the electron gun gets to a certain point of the screen. Have a look at FIG 1, it shows where the interrupts occur on the test program supplied. So all those games that have the top half of the screen scrolling and the bottom half of the screen stationary are using raster interrupts. After modifying the scroll registers at the top of the screen, the computer generates a raster interrupt when the TV's electron gun is half way down the screen which executes a program which zeros the scroll registers. The rest of the screen is then stationary – easy peasy!

So here's the nitty gritty. The listing supplied (FIG 2) causes two raster interrupts to occur across the screen and does a scrolling message to boot. This is written to work with the Laser Genius/Machine Lightning assembler, but the source is quite clean so there shouldn't be any problems converting to other assemblers. If you don't have an assembler . . . then you should really have one, writing machine code in data statements is like skiing without posey sunglasses.

The first few equates are constants, speed is the scrolling message speed in pixels per frame, IRQ the 6510's interrupt vector. IV1 and IV2 are the positions on the screen where the interrupts are to happen, and START is just there because that's the way I always start my source listings.

At BEGIN we JSR VAR to init scrolling messages variables. All VAR does is set the scrolling message pointer to the start of the message, so when the message starts it doesn't scroll random

FIG 1



HNICAL BIT IN THE MIDDLE



```
SPEED   =1

IRQ     =$314
IV1     =0
IV2     =$32+8

IRQ     =$FFFE

START   =$5000
*       =START


BEGIN   JSR VAR
        JSR INT
MLOOP   JMP MLOOP


VAR     LDA #<MESS; SETS THE MESSAGE POINTER TO POINT AT
        STA MP+1;   THE MESSAGE.
        LDA #>MESS;
        STA MP+2
        RTS


INT     SEI
        LDX #<I1;   CHANGE INTERRUPT VECTORS SO THEY HOP TO I1
        LDY #>I1;   INSTEAD OF ULTRA RUBBISH KERNAL INTERRUPT
        JSR SETIRQ; HANDLER.

        LDA #$35;   GET RID OF THE KERNAL AND BASIC
        STA $01;

        LDA #1;     ENABLE RASTER INTERRUPTS
        STA $D01A
        LDA #$FF;   CLEAR VIC INTERRUPT REQUEST REGISTER
        STA $D019;
        LDA #IV1;   IV1 IS THE SCREEN RASTER POSITION AND YOU STORE THAT
        STA $D012;  IN $D012.
        LDA $D011;
        AND #$7F;
        STA $D011

        LDA #0;     THIS STOPS THE OPERATING SYSTEM GENERATING ITS OWN
        STA $DC0E;  RUBBISH FLAVOURED KEY SCANNING INTERRUPTS
        LDA #$7F
        STA $DC0D
        LDA $DC0D
        CLI
        RTS
```

FIG 2

memory into view. INT sets up raster interrupts to happen, and MLOOP JMP MLOOP just sits there doing diddly squat until interrupted by our little routine. Goto INT. You'll see where it all happens and here's how it happens instruction by instruction.

SEI disables interrupts so that when we're messing about setting up the interrupts to happen, another interrupt doesn't happen and mess everything up. God, I'm so sick of the word INTERRUPT already and I'm only half way through! The next two commands put the high and lo byte of the new interrupt routine into the X and Y registers for the routine SETIRQ which changes the interrupt vector to point at the routine held in X and Y. Normally there's Rom at this part of memory and that points to the Kernal's own interrupt vector, so to get rid of that the next two statements bank out the Kernal by altering location 1. Basic is also banked out, so you can use $A000 to $BFFF without any qualms.

Now we start to talk to the VIC chip and tell him what the score is. First thing to do is to enable raster interrupts, and that's done by setting bit zero of $D01A (in other words just bung a one in). $D019 is the register that gets set when an interrupt has happened so that has to be cleared by bunging an $FF in there, yes I know bunging a zero in would be much more logical, but that's the way it is. Okay, so now the computer is getting an idea what we want it to do so now we'd better tell it when to do it. $D012 is the raster register, and the number stored there determines where on the screen the interrupt will happen. Since there are 351 raster lines on the screen, one byte is not enough to encompass them all, so Bit 7 of $D011 is the raster register hi bit. Since I want the interrupts to happen at the top of the screen, Bit 7 needs clearing – which is exactly what that AND #$7F does.

The next few lines before the CLI disables BASICS interrupts, they normally occur every 060th of a second and scan the keyboard. Since the keyscanning is disabled if you need to poll any keys, then I'm afraid you'll have to write your own keyscanner. CLI re-enables interrupts and RTS RTS's. Well all that rubbish leaves the machine heavily pregnant with interruptness, so we'd better have a look at the routine that'll be executed when the sprog is dropped.

It's called I1, and as with all Interrupt routines the first thing it does is save any registers it's going to change for retrieval before it returns. If you're wondering about what happens to the processor status byte then wonder no more, the 6510 automatically saves it along with the return address. To stop the raster interrupt happening again and again you have to set Bit 1 of $D019 just so VIC knows you've had it (snigger snigger). As there's two different interrupts to happen across the screen, we need to set up the next one which happens at IV2. So bung that value in $D012 and change the IRQ vector with SETIRQ to point at routine I2. The next few lines handle the scrolling message and aren't very interesting at all. From AS down is where the registers are returned to their

```
;                  THIS IS THE FIRST RASTER INTERRUPT THAT GETS
;                  ACTIVATED AT RASTER POSITION IV1. IT HANDLES
;                  THE SCROLLING MESSAGE.

I1      STA AS+1;  SAVE ALL THE REGISTERS THAT I NEED TO USE
        STX XS+1;
        STY YS+1;

        LDA #1;    ACKNOWLEDGE THE INTERRUPT BECAUSE ANOTHER
        STA $D019; WILL HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T

        LDA #IV2;  SET UP THE NEXT RASTER TO HAPPEN
        STA $D012; AT RASTER POSITION IV2

        LDX #<I2;  AND MAKE SURE IT GOES TO ROUTINE I2
        LDY #>I2
        JSR SETIRQ


;                  THE FOLLOWING ROUTINE HANDLES THE SCROLLING MESSAGE
;                  BUT YOU COULD PUT ANYTHING HERE.

SM      LDA #0;    THIS IS THE X FINE STORE AND IT'S SELF MODIFIED
;                  SO ISN'T ALWAYS A LDA #0. SOMETIMES IT'S SOMETHING
;                  ELSE. SOMETIMES

        BPL YUP;     SKIP TO YUP IF IT'S OKAY
        AND #3;      GET RID OF RUBBISH BITS
        STA SM+1;    AND STORE BACK INTO THE X FINE STORE
        JSR SCROLL;  DO THE SCROLL MAN.

YUP     ORA #$C0;    CHANGE XFINE VALUE INTO SOMETHING
        STA $D016;   ACCEPTABLE FOR $D016 AND STORE IT THERE
        LDA #SPEED;  XFINE=XFINE-SPEED
        SEC
        SBC SM+1
        STA SM+1


AS      LDA #0;      RESTORE REGISTERS
XS      LDX #0;
YS      LDY #0;
        RTI;         AND RETRUN TO THE FOREGROUND PROGRAM
```

```
;                  I2 IS THE SECOND INTERRUPT ROUTINE AND IT STOPS THE
;                  BOTTOM BIT OF THE SCREEN FROM SCROLLING.

I2      STA AS2+1; SAVE ALL THE RELEVANT REGS
        STX XS2+1
        STY YS2+1

        LDA #1;    SAY CHEERS TO VIC FOR THE INTERRUPT
        STA $D019

        LDA #IV1;  AND SET HIM UP TO GENERATE ANOTHER AT IV1
        STA $D012

        LDX #<I1;  THAT'LL EXECUTE THE ROUTINE I1
        LDY #>I1;
        JSR SETIRQ

        LDA #$C0;  XFINE =0. THIS STOPS THE BOTTOM BIT OF THE SCREEN
        STA $D016; PLAYING MR WOBBLY.

AS2     LDA #0;    RESTORE THE REGISTERS
YS2     LDY #0;
XS2     LDX #0;
        RTI;       AND RETURN FROM INTERRUPT

;                  SCROLL SCROLLS THE SCROLL LINE BY ONE SCROLL
;                  AND SCROLLS THE NEW SCROLL CHARACTER INTO VIEW

SCROLL  LDY #0;    SCROLL THE LINE BY A CHAR

SCLP    LDA $401,Y; WITH THE AID OF A SUPER ACE LOOP
        STA $400,Y; STRUCTURE
        INY
        CPY #40
        BNE SCLP

MP      LDA $ABCD;  GET NEW CHAR
        BNE OK;     AND IF IT'S THE END THEN
        JSR VAR;    RESET MP TO POINT TO MESS AND
        LDA MESS;   GET THE FIRST CHAR FROM THE MESSAGE

OK      AND #$3F;   TURN CHAR INTO A SCREEN CODE AND
        STA $400+39;STORE AT FAR RIGHT OF THE SCREEN
        RTS

SETIRQ  STX IRQ;    SETIRQ POINTS THE IRQ VECTORS TO ROUTINE
        STY IRQ+1;  HELD IN X AND Y.
        RTS

MESS    .BYTE "I AM SO BRILL AND YOU ARE ALL PIG SWILL",0
```

original values and then the RTI instruction Returns from InTerrupt, back into the foreground MLOOP JMP MLOOP. I2 is executed at raster position IV2 and zeros the X fine register ($D016 bits 0-2) so that the bottom of the screen doesn't wobble about. I2 points the next raster interrupt to happen at IV1 and to execute I1.

Phew! A bit of a mouthful all that, but it is worth learning the 'ins and outs' of raster splitting, because mastering these opens the doors to all forms of binary belly-laughs. Anyway, I hope that's been helpful to you – see you next month, and watch out for Rudolph.



DEDIC

THE SEGA MA

First heralded by Ariolasoft during the summer of 1986, The Sega Master System was displayed prominently at last year's PCW show. Then . . . nothing. Rumours of 'perfect arcade conversions' crossed the Atlantic, but Ariolasoft seemed to have no plans to distribute the machine in the UK. Now Mastertronic have taken over the distribution rights, and at long last the Sega system is readily available – complete with a copy of *Hang-On*, and costing £99.95

The console itself is lightweight, with two cartridge ports, one in the top and the other in the front. Pause and reset buttons are mounted on the sloping front panel and two standard joystick ports are located in a central position on the underside. The two controllers supplied are similar to the Nintendo joycards, although the Sega control pads have tiny joystick shafts which are screwed into the centre of the rocker switches if required. Independent start and fire buttons are mounted to the right of the switches.

A range of 12 titles has been launched with the machine, coming in three formats: credit card sized **Sega Cards**, the more standard **Mega Cartridges**, and the **Two Mega Cartridges**, available at £14.95, £19.95 and £24.95 respectively. Older games, such as *Hang-On* and *My Hero* are available on Sega Cards, *Choplifter* and *Fantasy Zone* come on the Mega Cartridge format and the newer arcade conversions, like *Space Harrier* and *Out Run*, will be available as Two Mega Cartridges.

Also available at £44.95 is the Sega Light Phaser, a light gun which comes with *Marksman Shooting/Trap Shooting* Mega Cartridge. Further light gun compatible games are to be released later in the year.

Revolutionary 3D Glasses are to be a further addition to the system in October. These LCD shuttered specs will be linked directly to the Sega console and will operate in conjunction with specially designed games (two titles, *Zaxxon 3D* and *World War 3D* have already been announced). Favourable reports have already preceeded the game-enhancing goggles – we'll be looking at them when they appear.

Five games a month are scheduled to appear between now and Christmas, with *Enduro Racer* and *Out Run* already slated for release. New peripherals have also been promised, but Mastertronic are keeping details of these very close to their chest.

There's plenty of activity in the dedicated console market at the moment, and the product quality is sure to increase as both the Sega and the Nintendo struggle for a higher share of the market. We'll be covering new games and peripherals as they appear.



THE NINJA

***Commando** goes oriental in this vertically/diagonally scrolling shoot 'em up. The going is tough, but items dropped by dead enemies can be picked up and used to good effect. On screen information is lacking, but the action is very involved.*

TRANSBOT

*A simple, but colourful horizontally-scrolling **Nemesis** style shoot 'em up. Extra weapons are collected and used one at a time, with their effects only lasting temporarily.*

CATED

ASTER SYSTEM

The fact that most computer owners use their machines simply as games consoles would suggest that a market exists for a dedicated machine offering full screen arcade-style graphics, 'realistic' sound and the end to long loading times. However, as with the Nintendo console, the Sega's software is a great let-down. The full-screen graphics are generally superb, marred only by the occasionally flickering sprites. The sound too has potential, but the lack of variation and often grating effects tend to repel the player rather than enhance the gameplay. Once again I'm left slightly disappointed. The hardware has great possibilities, but the five supplied games were uninspired and at worst irritating – stick with your Commodore until the software fully realises its potential.

CIARAN BRENNAN

A number of different factors combine to make this a very impressive piece of hardware. *Hang-On* is one of the best racing games around, and *Choplifter* and *Fantasy Zone* are simply superb. The graphics and sound have great potential, but I would have liked to hear a little more than the standard white noise effects used in the five games we tested. However, the question burning in the minds of most potential console buyers must be: 'which one should I buy – Sega or Nintendo?' This is a difficult question to answer – it really depends on what sort of games you want to play! The Sega has a range of impressive and well-known arcade games while the Nintendo's tend to be more obscure, with the emphasis on the 'cute' – but they are nevertheless addictive and challenging. The Nintendo has the superb *Super Mario Bros* and a huge range of Japanese titles behind it, whereas the Sega boasts standard joystick ports as well as *Out Run*, *Space Harrier* and *Enduro Racer* to look forward to. The choice is yours – but think hard and long.

JULIAN RIGNALL

Sega's long-awaited Master System is a very smart package. The first thing that strikes you are the game packs themselves. Along with the fairly standard cartridges are the tiny credit cards that slot in the front – handy if you want to take games to a friend's house. I was, however, disappointed to find that although the machine supports standard joysticks, they aren't suitable for the majority of games and you are left with no option but to use the control pads – an art that I find terribly difficult to master. The games supplied are also on the unimpressive side, especially *Hang On* which is not, as previously suggested, an exact copy of the arcade version. I also noticed a surprising amount of sprite flicker, something which did not expect from such a supposed wonder machine. Current software aside, it's still possible to see the system's potential. There is an untapped ability to utilise huge amounts of colours and sprites, and I wait in anticipation for the 3-D glasses and games which may well mark a new era in computer gaming.

STEVE JARRATT



HANG-ON

The classic motorcycle racing game which comes with the system. Visually it's very similar to the arcade original, but the road layout is different and the bike has three gears! Pictured here is level four – the Night City.

WORLD GRAND PRIX

Rip around some of the World's most famous race courses, using your winnings to buy new parts and increase your chances. There's also a track designer to add that extra degree of lastability.

MY HERO

An evil bunch of punks have kidnapped your girlfriend, and it's up to you to rescue her. ***Kung-Fu Master*** *action ensues all the way in this fighting arcade adventure which somehow manages to remain 'cute'. Here, the hero is about to confront the gang leader, Mohikan, for a final deadly showdown.*

TWENTY TWE

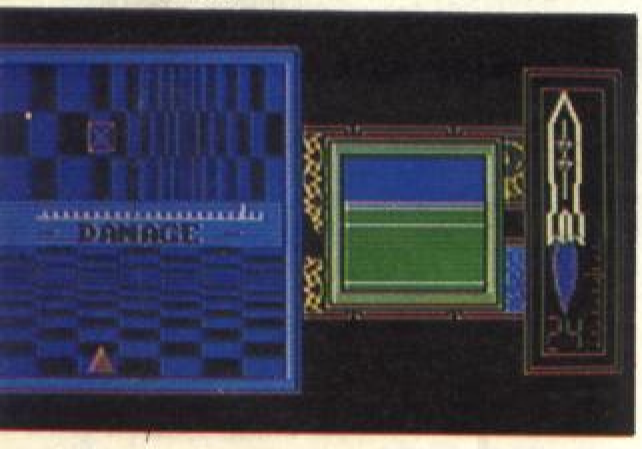
Originally, Paul Norris and Rupert Bowater formed half of the Electric Pencil Company, producers of the acclaimed *Zoids* and *Fourth Protocol*. Last year however, the duo broke away to form their own company, Binary Vision, and have just released *Stifflip and Co* on the Palace label. Julian Rignall spoke to Paul Norris about the company and their plans for the future.



▲ **Binary Vision's latest release, *Stifflip and Co***

Paul Norris and Rupert Bowater originally cut their programming teeth at Thorn EMI, developing games for the now extinct Texas TI micro computer. Their initial efforts were far from successful though, as Paul explains . . . 'we'd both spent a year programming and were really proud of what we'd done – especially as nobody had done anything really good for the TI. Unfortunately there was a huge inter-company argument and the games ended up being shelved.'

▼ **The main *Zoids* screen, showing the missile's trajectory and the view from its on-board camera**



Undeterred, Paul took up programming on the Commodore 64 and produced *Ice Palace*, which was released on the Creative Sparks label (reviewed in ZZAP! issue one). Paul continues the story, 'during that time Rupert and Benni Notarrinni had formed the Electric Pencil Company and were working on the *The Fourth Protocol*. I joined them after finishing *Ice Palace*, but had to stop programming for the last two months of development to complete my finals at University.'

Following the success of *The Fourth Protocol*, Martech commissioned the Electric Pencil Company to program the officially licensed *Zoids* game. 'We spent a long time trying to sort out what to put in', says Paul. 'The product was aimed at a lower age group, and we eventually produced a game which was at the end of the market – I think we lost out because of that. The other thing about *Zoids* is that it's such an incredibly hard game. What it lacked was a joint between the pick up and play style and lasting appeal.'

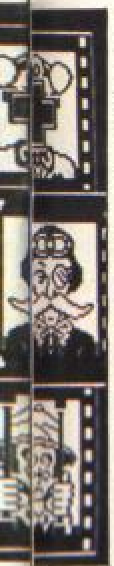
And did Paul think they'd got the balance right with *Stifflip & Co* ? 'With Stifflip, we tried to introduce an 'arcadey' element – picking up and dropping objects for instance – but without the hassle of having to type things in. We also wanted it to be fun. It was a case of getting rid of all the things that Rupert and I don't like about adventures, getting stuck, making maps and worrying about what the parser's doing.'

'We came up with the idea of a fun 1920's style game with lots of bad jokes when we were

HANG IN THERE
ALL YOU SUPERS

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ENTY VISION

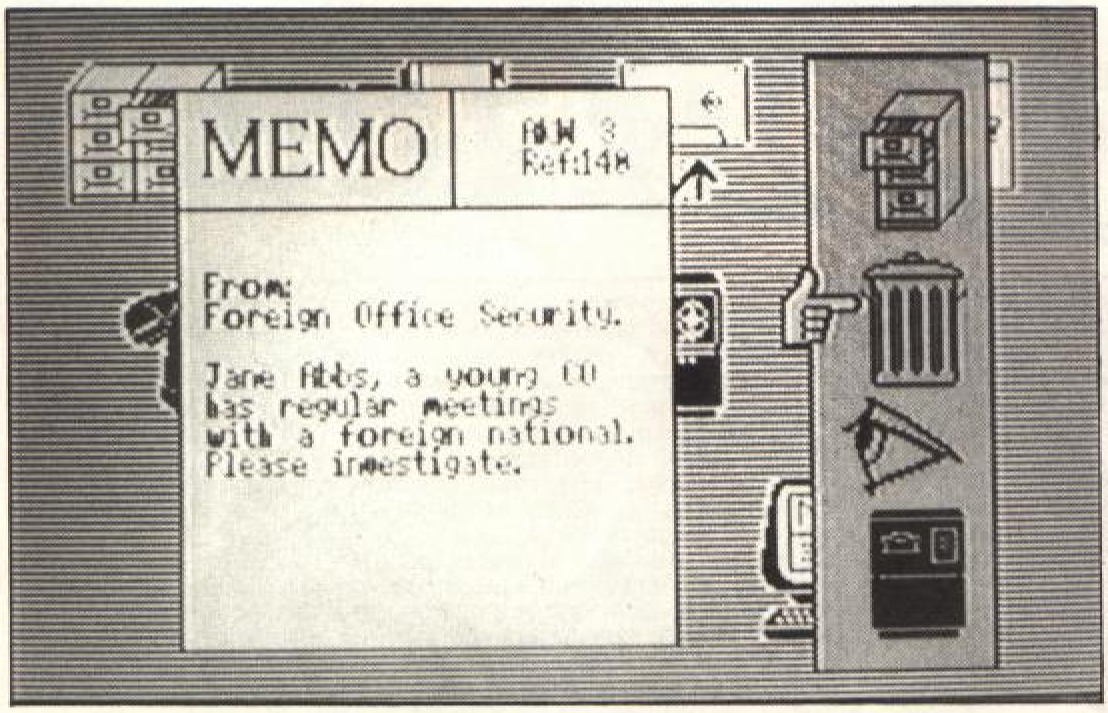


working on *Zoids*, but it was put on ice until we'd finished. When we did eventually find time, we got together with Palace and discussed the game design. It has taken about year to finish and has been an awful lot of work. It takes so much longer to write an original game because you have to try everything out. If it doesn't work, it has to be adapted, and all that takes so much longer. It really is twice as long in development as, say, a conversion.'

Binary Vision have certainly got a reputation for producing original games. What are the plans for the next one? 'A shoot 'em up which you can get straight into', says Paul after some thought. 'Something where thinking is just a part of the process of progression. It's going to be set in a living universe so there should be plenty of opportunity for some really striking graphics. I hope to get something which creates an atmosphere, just like Bladerunner. It just felt that you were living there, and I think a game can do that. I'm also very interested in the idea of producing a two-player game. I don't think there's any point in playing alternate goes, it's more of the interactive stuff. I don't want to say too much because it's still at the stage where things can change so much.'

Unfortunately Paul reckons there'll be nothing to see for at least nine months. We'll just have to wait until next summer . . .

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ROCKFORD'S VOICE

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THE 10th PERSONAL COMPUTER WORLD SHOW?

GET IN FOR FREE!

The razzamatazz of *the* show of the year is soon be upon us once again. The 10th PCW Show is to be held in London – and Olympia's National Hall will change, overnight, from an empty and peaceful space into a seething mass of sweaty bodies all fighting to get at the glittering stands.

It's fun, it's noisy, it's chaotic, it's got the ZZAP! crew (well, three out of four ain't bad!) and for the computer-loving public, it's the place to be in September.

And you can be there too, at a price of course – *unless* you're one of 50 winners of this competition, in which case you can get into this emporium of computer-generated happiness without having to pay a penny! When you get there you can trot up to the Newsfield stand (number 3040) and pick up your free PCW Show programme, along with a copy of Newsfield's forthcoming magazine THE GAMES MACHINE – which is set to be launched at the show. *And* you can natter to everyone from ZZAP! who should be on the stand throughout the show – unless they're on 'important business' that is.

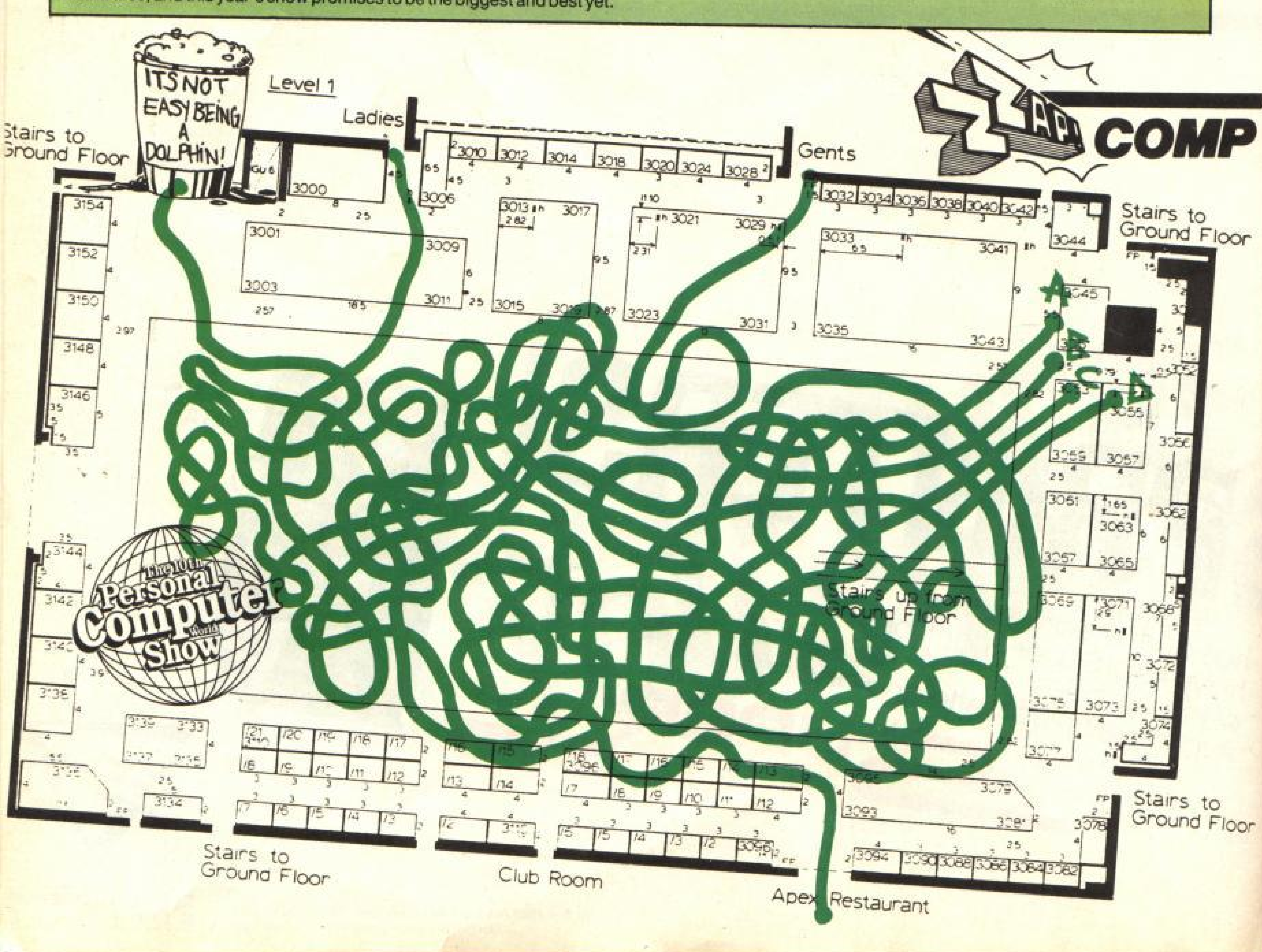
There'll be hundreds of software and hardware companies showing off their wares, and this year's show promises to be the biggest and best yet.

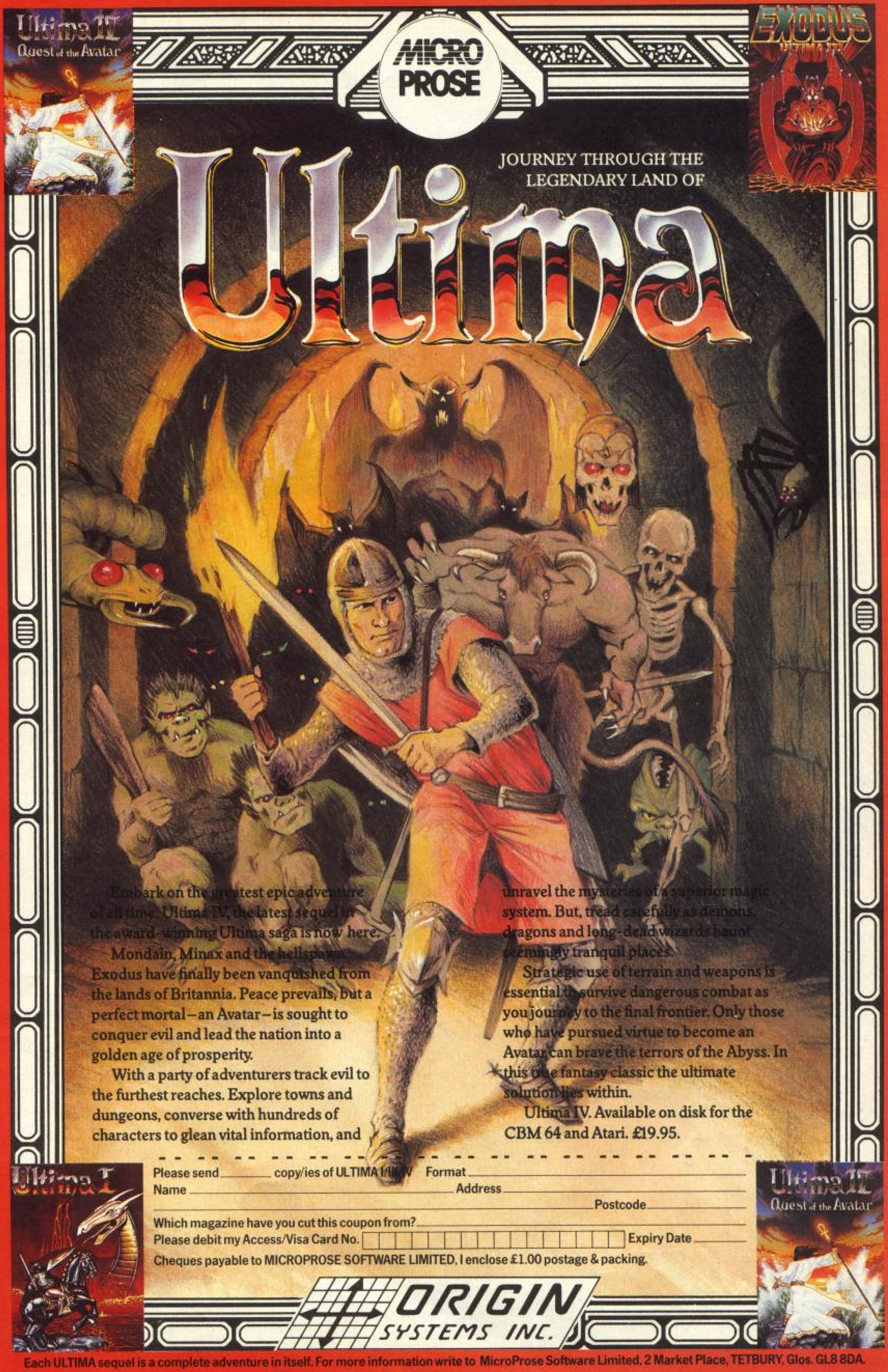
Anyway, back to the comp . . .

As you all know, we have just gained a new editor, none other than that bastion of Irish wit, Ciarán Brennan. He's new to the PCW show, and to tell the truth he just might get a bit lost on his way from the Newsfield stand to the . . . er . . . refreshments. The friendly art department have obtained a floor plan of the show and have drawn on some of the possible ways for the Ed to stagger across the hall and into the journalist's watering hole. Only one of the trails actually reaches the pint of Guinness lovingly prepared for Mr B, and we would like you to tell us which path is the correct one that he should take.

Jot the answer down on a postcard along with your name, address and telephone number (if you have one) and stick it in the post box with this written on the front: **PCW COMP, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.**

Entries must arrive before August 25th. Tickets will be despatched to the 50 winners well before the show, and they may be used on any of the public days which are between September 25th and 27th.

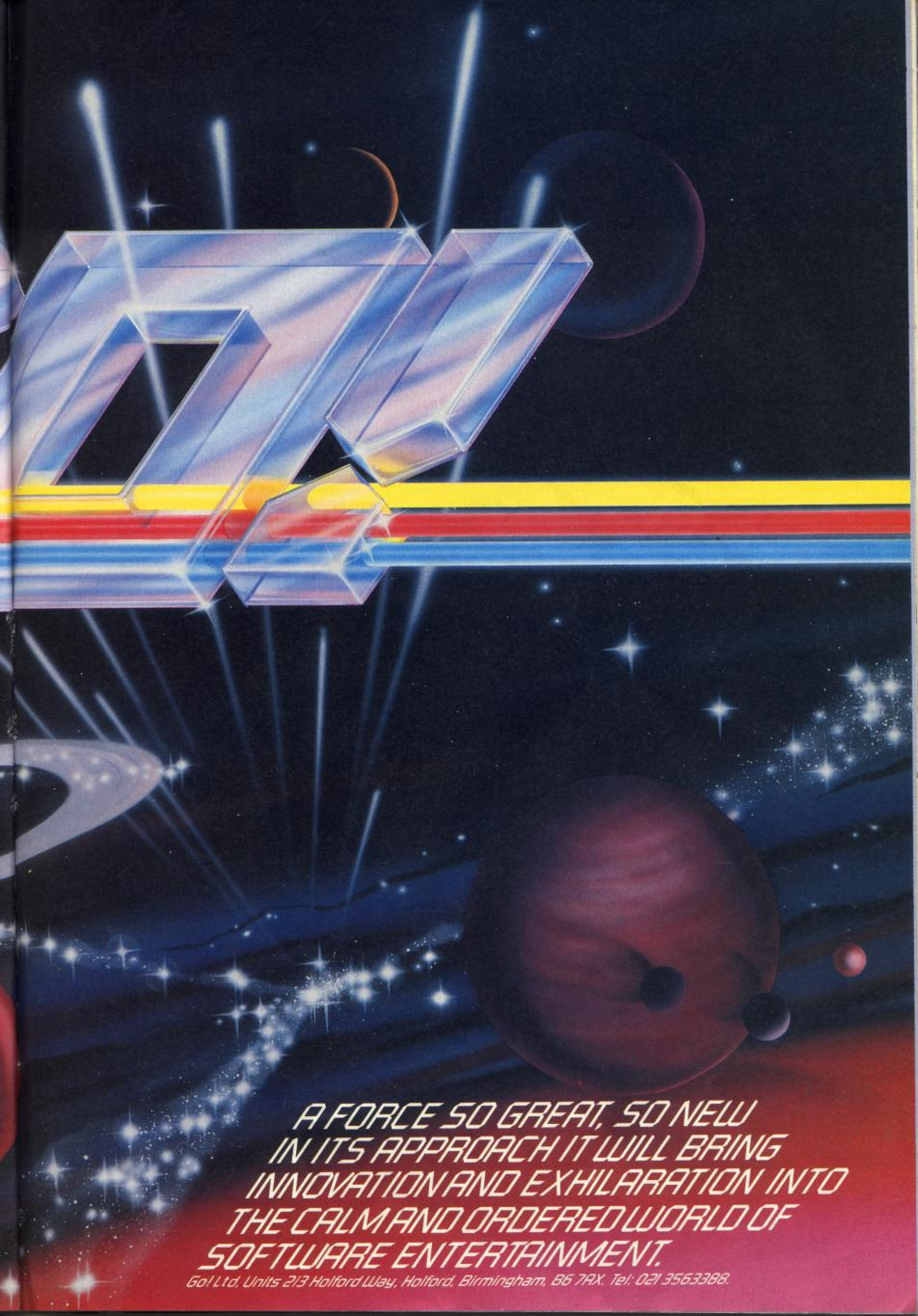




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MENTAL PROCREATION

By Andrew Braybrook

Monday 15th June

ST had been trying to cure our data transmission problems last week. It's now quite rare that we successfully download a file for testing, and they're getting quite large so the chances of getting an error has increased. By keying in a quick analysing routine we discovered that sometimes the Opus doesn't switch its data-ready signal off very cleanly, so much so that it causes a second trigger. This only occurs briefly, but long enough to fool the C64 that another byte of data is ready. Therefore our receiving program reads in the supposed new data, and when it comes to check-for-errors time it discovers that someone has made a boo-boo. By checking the CIA latch a second time after the data is accepted, and ignoring it we have alleviated these 'ghost' images. No errors have occurred in the ten or so downloads since.

I've fixed the bug that allowed the ship to pass through charge orbitals in two directions, and I'm reasonably happy that everything is working correctly. I've put in an extra piece of information at the beginning of each phrase which shows the current level and what I'll call the current 'timeslice'. This is an indication of real time taken playing games, which is used to to derive the effectiveness of your weapons against the enemy. A weapon built in timeslice ten will be fairly ineffective by timeslice 20. Each timeslice will represent about two minutes of play.

Tuesday 16th June

Half day today. Got to grips with the compacted sprites and organised the ones that I'd drawn already. I then noticed that that many of the images were symmetrical top to bottom. This led me to try further compaction by only keeping the top half, and then reflecting the required images prior to use. The routine turned out to be quite small, and certainly simpler than reflecting left to right, which I had to do in Paradroid. Unfortunately the decompaction system went slightly wrong when the 'it was written so long ago it's bound to work' sprite header routine failed miserably! It was supposed to nip through the compacted sprites and note where each one starts, which saves me either reading through them all every time I want one header, or holding all the headers in a table all the time. However, it managed to miscount so it got out of step with the actual images, so by the time the individual sprite decompacter got there it was picking up the wrong data completely.

Wednesday 17th June

I've never written one before but it suddenly dawned on me that an automatic sprite animation system would be a good idea. A lot of space has been wasted in previous programs by objects each having their own bit of animation code, like 'every fourth cycle add one to the sprite frame and if it's bigger than 'X' then subtract seven from it.' This can be done on a similar basis to the automatic sprite colour system, which relies on any one sprite being used for one purpose only. This may require some duplicate sprites, but since they're all compacted I don't mind.

I had a discussion at the CBM show on Sunday about the merits or otherwise of high-ish level languages – mainly C. Personally I think it's a pig of a language, as it is totally wrapped up in its own syntax structures. It has two ways of specifying equals, either '=' or '==' depending on whether it's in the equivalent of a BASIC LET or IF. Every other language I've come across manages with only one symbol, they know which one you're talking about by the context of the line. C also makes you put curly brackets round multiple statements within an IF-ELSE structure, something which COBOL achieves by use of nothing more than a carefully placed full stop.

Thursday 18th June

The sprite animation system is playing up. Objects disappear, flash on and off and go through the wrong sequences – anything to get out of working properly. I checked the object handlers and the animation routine, found a few errors but all to no avail. It took until 4:30 to find the cock-up. It was the animation instructions that were wrong. Apparently eight plus three is not 83 at all! This causes sprite sequences to jump about wildly, sometimes picking 'suicide frames', causing objects to automatically delete themselves on the final frame of explosions etc. I thought it would be tidier if objects cleared themselves away.

Friday 19th June

Spent much of the day on the sprite editor. I want a design for the charge supervisors, which will travel around looking for trouble – that is, as soon as an orbital is attacked they will head towards it. However all I managed to design were a few more roamers.

I haven't had any transmission problems at all this week so it looks as if we have correctly diagnosed the fault as being cheap and untidy electronics at the PC end.

Got a rough draft of the artwork from Hewson's today. They've been looking at my Amiga artwork, so their artwork is quite closely related to what I'm intending for the game. I'm reasonably impressed by the layout, but they didn't use my logo, just some old Paradroid-style lettering. They said my logo looked like a row of coffins in space.

Monday 22nd June

Tidied up a number of loose ends and fixed all known bugs. I had to make the Universe slightly bigger as some particles were intent on leaving it. I also reduced the size of the fastest polar speeds, the fastest bullets were just flashes across the screen, not very practical for collision detection.

Went on a programmer's fitness course at the weekend, which involved transferring graphics from the C64 (downstairs) to the Amiga (upstairs) for enlargement and enhancement. This involved memorising graphics on the C64, racing upstairs, and redrawing them on the Amiga – I bet it's still faster than RS-232. the net result is that I've drawn the 16 system units in 32 glorious colours at double the size for inclusion in an accompanying booklet.

Tuesday 23rd June

Toyed with the smart bomb weapon to get it to work. It'll be a medium-term weapon rather than a once-off blast. It'll start off at maximum strength and decay to zero after firing, so it'll affect meanies arriving on the screen. Also it won't necessarily kill meanies outright, especially if the weapon is getting old.

Also put in the collision detection for my own bullets. Having a maximum of eight, and there being eight bits in a byte makes things quite simple. The bullets are small but are moving quite fast, up to eight pixels per move, so character accuracy is all that is required. Each meanie will check the character position under its centre for the presence of a bullet. I'm not using sprite to sprite hardware collision detection for a number of reasons, mainly that it isn't all that helpful in multiple collisions knowing that sprites one, two, six and seven have collided somewhere. Which one has collided with which, or have they all met in the middle? Many collisions are irrelevant and needn't be checked.

I also worked out all the data for the weapons development table, all 57 weapons. Each has its own firing type, bullet fired, reload time, construction time, graphic number, and cost to build. Any volunteers to check that they're all present and correct?

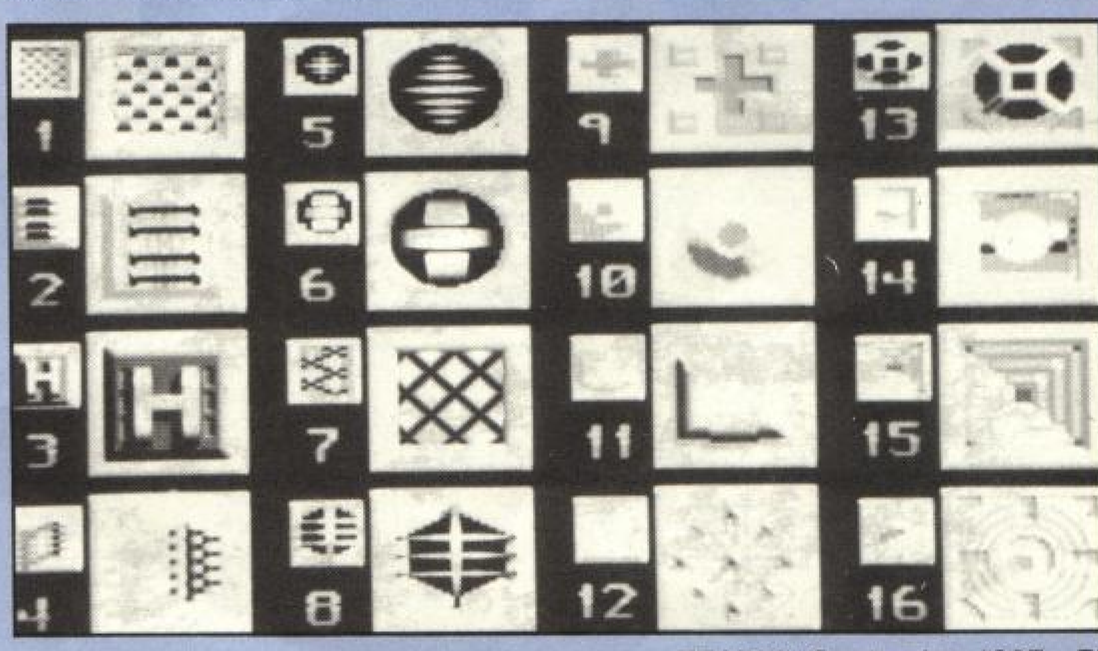
Wednesday 24th June

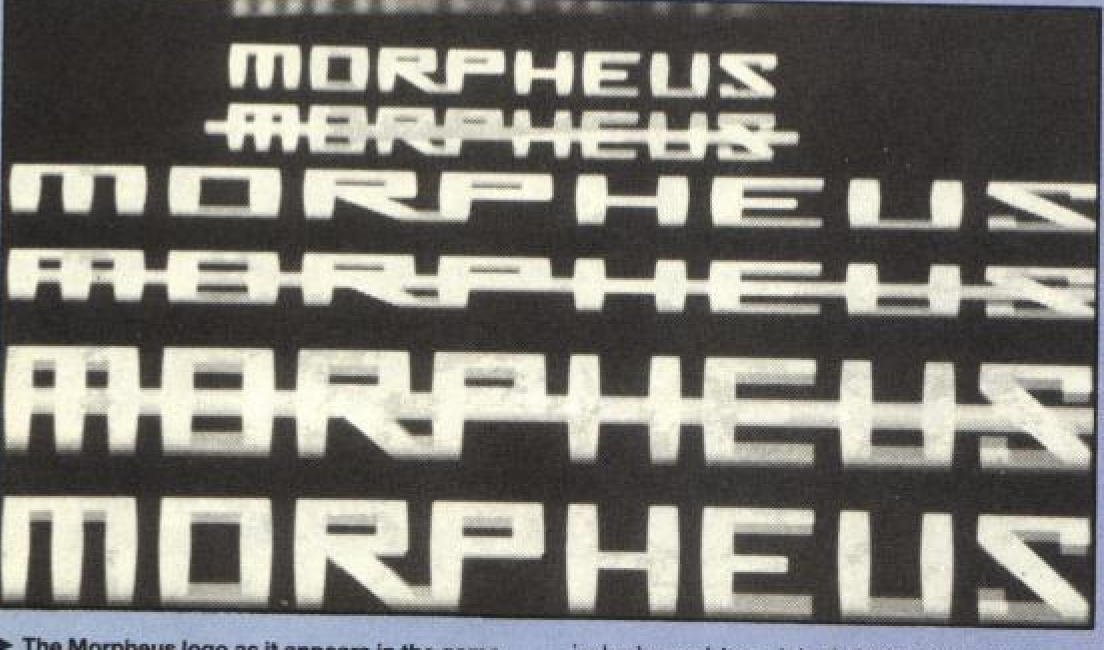
Been doing some random spot checks on the weapons. I'd managed to ruin the sequential fire system. It fired one bullet, waited for ages and then released the next seven in quick succession. Apparently it had waited for the gun to reload before firing the remaining bullets.

I've started putting in all the bits that nick the energy, including collisions with orbitals, and firing the guns. Yes, the guns take energy to fire, life's like that. They don't take very much though, without any energy replenishing systems the ship is still good for some 1500 bullets. This will become virtually unlimited once a solar cell or other device has been installed.

I've also improved the smart bomb system. It kept firing by accident as I left the unit, which isn't damaging with normal guns, but the smart bomb can drain up to a fifth of the total energy so something must be done. It requires a delay before

▶ The 16 systems which can be incorporated into the ship





▶ The Morpheus logo as it appears in the game

it fires, so I decided to use this delay properly, not just a delay for delay's sake. It counts a timer upwards and will fire when it reaches the bomb's preset value. However, as it counts up, it checks itself against the current energy level. On firing it will use up the amount of energy equal to the timer, so if there is insufficient energy available during build-up it will abort firing. The later smart bombs will build up quicker and thus use less energy – they'll reload quicker too. I'll use sonics to show this build-up and it'll be possible to abort firing at any time.

Thursday 25th June

Some of the charge orbitals were appearing a bit late on the screen. It seems that updating one every 32 cycles wasn't quite enough so I've doubled them up so that two are updated every 16 cycles. This seems to be running everything more smoothly, except that now they're all decaying twice as fast. This means that I have less time to find them. This won't be the case in the finished game as the charge rejuvenator will be visiting all the orbitals in turn, but he's not coded up yet. It's quite difficult to find the orbitals at the moment, so I rigged up one of the systems to glow when there's one nearby. This should be useful on later levels.

I've enhanced the shield's generators so they show their current status with colour, and you can also buy another system which shows the current status of the whole ship's shields. I have three remaining systems that don't have a current purpose.

For the first time I can now score points to earn money to buy weapons and systems. I've currently got a cheat version that gives me buckets of money anyway and allows me to build any of the weapons instantly. The systems don't decay with time, as it's really the meanie's growing immunity to the weapons which causes the weapons to fail, but the systems can be blown up if the shields collapse.

Friday 26th June

Put in a new system device – a direction to nucleus indicator. This should help navigation tremendously. Begin an eight-directional indicator, I thought I'd borrow a calculation routine from Paradroid that decides which laser bolt frames to use. One problem though – ST and I realised that it didn't work . . . well not quite anyway. We also realised that it only has to calculate four directions, it has no need to differentiate between up and down as the bolts are reversible. We therefore decided to work it all out from first principles.

At first our marvellous indicator was incapable of showing diagonals. We had used the line equations the wrong way round when working out whether a point is above or below 2X = Y and 2Y = X. The direction finder could turn out to be useful, so I've made it a separate routine from the indicator so that I can use it later for other functions.

For better between-game continuity I think I'll rig it such that upon demise the player's funds remain for the next game. This will allow a quicker building up of a new ship.

Monday 29th June

Put in some close manoeuvring to stop the ship if it's moving very slowly. This helps with close positioning of the ship and also lessens the times when stars are moving very slowly. It took me a while to suss out that this was not working in the engines section, as it has a quite get-out clause normally to check for dematerialisation.

I put in a top limit for the amount of money that can be carried forward to the next game. I can just see some idiots playing level one and then quitting for half the night to build up a mega-fortune for one game. Tough luck, cheats!

Over the weekend I spotted a double star flitting between two places on the screen at high speed. I've been running the game for a while hoping to reproduce this error so that I can investigate, but will it happen again? No chance!

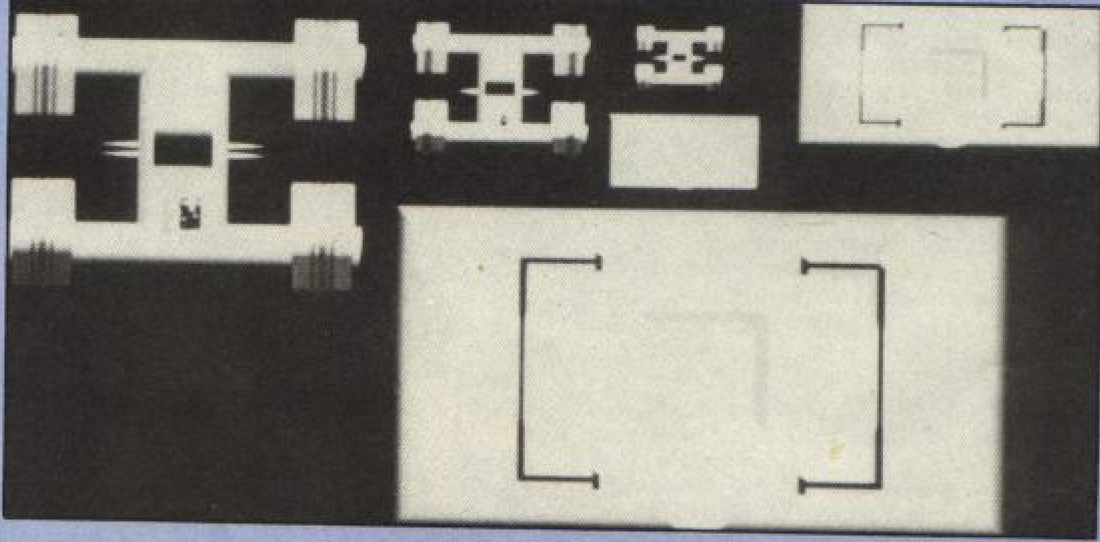
Actually got recognised in Tesco's, so to ensure that I don't get run over by a shopping trolley next time, hi to Rob and John!

Tuesday 30th June

Put down on paper all the ideas for meanie movement and initiation. This is the last big push to get the game in a playable state, the rest will just be tuning up and adding some frills. Most meanies will be generated as a result of altering the change of an orbital. I shall start them off on preset launch patterns and then switch them over to manual control where I hope they will behave with a bit of character. I want a more varied spread of speeds through the levels, and meanies will be able to generate bullets or other meanies.

Bought Slapfight last Saturday. Great game in the arcades so I had high hopes of a good game. It's beeen converted very well, good playability and visuals, well done, but what about all the program refinements? No pause mode, no quit game, and to cap it all it uses sprites in the top border for the score. Well I can't see the score on my TV set, it's off the top. Black mark for that one, why is it up so high?

▶ The remote droid and landing pad



Wednesday 1st July

First day of overtime, I was scheduled to complete Morpheus yesterday, but I've missed a number of days work for one reason or another and I really want this game to be something special – so it'll come out when it's ready. This is an artistic expression, not something off a production line.

Started coding the meanie initiator and control routines. I didn't feel like coding a lot of routines up again slightly differently, so I decided to adapt the ones that already run the bullets and the remote. This saves code and simplifies things (famous last words).

Sure enough I ended up with no bullets and an invisible remote. Haven't the faintest idea why. The objects are getting initiated in the correct places, they just die immediately. Last time anything did that it was the animator's fault, but not this time.

Thursday 2nd July

Found the no-bullets bug last night by staring at the listing. Apparently someone had put two instructions in the wrong order. Wait until I find out who that was. The disappearing remote took a while longer, but was another typing error. I'd taken the Y co-ordinate of the remote's position, added the Y movement and then stuffed the result in the X co-ordinate by mistake. When you're convinced that a piece of code is working you just read what you want to see, not what's actually there.

Continued to write the bullet and meanie initiator and handlers. Since meanies can fire other meanies instead of bullets, I can have a whole sequence of meanies. They have different conditions for generating others, randomly, only when wounded, or only when killed. Generally meanies will only take one shot to kill, but outdated weapons will be less effective. Injured meanies will have different flight patterns, usually wild retreat, but slightly scratched ones may well get vicious. The smart bomb should have an interesting effect on them, especially an outdated one.

Was interested to read in this month's ZZAP! that multi-loads are okay if they load the next level while you're playing the current one, even if it's deliberately lengthened to give the loader time! This type of loader is loading data by getting the cassette to cause interrupts rather like Novaload does. This leaves about 50% of the CPU power to the main game and no interrupt capabilities. You could get more CPU steam up by slowing down the loader, and you could try to split the screen using NMIs, but I suspect that screen splitting would be impractical as it is heavily tied into the progress of the raster, which stops for no man. So this type of loader is fine for games with no raster splitting and little CPU usage, but don't expect that sort of thing in Uridium Plus 2 and Alleykat's Revenge which would use all available CPU wellie most of the time. This said, there are moments in games where very little is happening, for example when 'Player Ready' messages appear, so short bursts of I/O are possible. Searching tapes is not really practical though, and waiting for CBM disk I/0 is like watching paint dry. I think the short-term answer is better data compaction. I could have loaded each Uridium dreadnought from disk into its 9K buffer, each is 512 characters wide by 17 deep, but by compacting this data I could specify each one in about 600 bytes. Thus I could fit 16 layouts into about 12K with overheads. If that were all decompacted at once it would take 144K, more than two C64s full!

Many multi-load games don't bother to compact data like background pictures, because they have already accepted that disk I/O is inevitable, so what's another ten seconds of load time, if they don't have to spend any time working out how to get the best use from data. If they thought about it more they could cut multi-load I/O times down by 75%, but the perceived value of a game that loads from disk is much higher because you think you're getting more for your money.

Friday 3rd July

Finished off the meanie and bullet handlers today, now all I've got to do is get them to work. I want the bullets to hit the shields and explode if the shields can take the hit, otherwise the bullets will skid across the surface of the ship doing more damage. I also want the meanies to bounce off the ship in a realistic manner, or get squashed against it if they can't get out of the way, such is the power of a large ship.

Realistic bouncing is always a problem, because although it's fairly easy to detect when the ship has been hit, it is not so easy to decide what direction to bounce off at. I got round this by defining a perpendicular direction from the face of each ship character. Any meanie approaching a block can be reflected across this perpendicular axis and pushed away. I also enhanced this by adding that if a meanie approaches from an unusual angle it will be allowed free passage.

Fired up the game after a multitude of assembly errors had been fixed. All was going well until I fired at a charge orbital which is supposed to release from one to eight meanies or bullets. This however did not happen. What did happen is that the game totally froze. Now I'll have to take out the routines one by one to find out which one caused it. This is always a problem when you add lots of inter-dependent routines at once. The code seems intact, it restarts okay after reset without reloading any files. There may well be an infinite loop coded in there.

Monday 6th July

There I was, checking all the routines for possible reasons why the machine locks up, and I came across a JSR $0000, a call to a routine at the 6510 data direction register? I think this could be the cause. The jolly old linker has left a gap in the code because it didn't know what the real address was supposed to be. It didn't bother to tell me that it didn't know because ever since day one it has whinged about not being given a transfer address. I don't even know what one of them is. I'd gladly let it have one but I don't know how to tell it either. The manual doesn't mention transfer addresses. I got so fed up with it telling me to give a transfer address that I told it to keep messages like that to itself, so it kept two unresolved labels to itself too. This is altogether more serious, it works without a transfer address, but it sure as Hell won't work with unresolved labels in it.

Tuesday 7th July

Debugged most of the meanie routines, and now I've got enough data in the game to generate several different types in a number of different ways. They are firing flak at me which can blow up onboard systems and damage the ship. Their manual movement patterns are switching in, but aren't yet positive enough to force them to move in any particular way, it's just a question of line adjustment.

The main problem that we've come across is that the game consists of moments of high activity followed by longer periods of travelling to another orbital. Finding the orbital is a bit haphazard. There are a number of systems to aid navigation, but I don't want to make them all available at the beginning. I've come to the conclusion that I need a medium range radar display.

Wednesday 8th July

I didn't want to put a radar screen in, but if the game requires one then it shall have it. Now, where shall I put it? I can't incorporate it into the main ship design, it's too big. I *refuse* to make it a sprite or two and bung it in the top border. I'll hang it below the game logo. I drew some scales round the edge to make a border for it but it looked rather sketchy. The actual coding didn't take very long but on firing up it didn't work. Not a radar plot in sight. Upon moving about I could occasionally get a dot to momentarily appear and that was all. I studied the code for ages and there was no way at all that it could possibly fail, but it did.



By 6.30 I was getting very cross indeed, the C128 nearly got thrown out of the window. It then suddenly dawned on me what I had done. Since I am plotting two orbitals every cycle it takes 16 cycles to prepare all their positions. I then spent the next 16 cycles copying one row of the radar to the screen, so this also takes 16 cycles to complete. This copying process is spread over some time to avoid doing time-consuming operations all at once – it also carries out the function of clearing out the old radar images once they have been copied to the screen. All this was jammed into the one routine, the first 16 cycles prepare the radar, the next 16 copy it to the screen. Now the problem is that this routine is called *twice* each cycle, so it copies the radar across, clears the old image, copies the now cleared image across again and finally clears it again. The set-up needs to be done twice, but the copying and clearing must only be done once. How could I be so stupid? Don't answer that.

Thursday 9th July

Changed the radar surround to a more solid border and built it up into more of a crest to fill it out. ST suggested that it be a different colour from space to distinguish it from the background so we eventually decided on blue. It looks quite neat now and serves its purpose very well.

Paul Hughes dropped by to discuss some new anti-cartridge techniques and loader. He left his Koalapad with me as I intend to use a bit-map picture as a loading screen, hopefully for the disk and tape version. I've done a mock-up on the Amiga-beast and it all looks feasible, trouble is I don't know how to use the Koalapad. I've tried turning it upside down and rolling it about on the table but I don't have big enough area.

Friday 10th July

Spent much of the day thinking about how to run the charge rejuvenators, the ships that periodically ferry charge from the central nucleus to the orbitals to counteract their decay. This involves getting the craft to the orbital (easy), carefully driving round it (not so easy) and finally docking with it from above (difficult). As the orbitals are positioned in a circle or other pattern around the nucleus then some are easy to approach from above, others are much harder and require more complex guidance.

I've changed my mind about the charge supervisors, apart from deciding that I only need one at a time. I'll make it appear in the distance and slowly approach to use the 3D depth effect a bit more. It'll appear after a while around any attacked orbital.

Monday 13th July

Put in some enhancements that I'd thought of over the last couple of days. I had to reduce the number of active meanies to six as they are eating up the CPU time. This isn't too much of a problem as I've also thought of a way of keeping them on screen without them crashing into the ship, they now run circles round it like Nigel Mansell on Silverstone.

I put in the code to run the rejuvenator, and after teaching them a bit of basic navigation they can now find their way from the nucleus to any of the orbital. They have to move quite slowly as they arrive, so that they can find their target accurately. Then I reveal my coup-de-grace, the 16 frame animation sequence to drop their charge and replenish the orbital.

I'll have to write the game instructions out soon, I've already done the page numbers, now all I have to do is fill in the rest.

► My interpretation of the logo – now I ask you, does that look like a row of coffins?



Here we-hee-hee ha-ha-ha-ha-are, la-ha-ha-ha-aughing to death, ha-ha, I've be-hee-hee-een dying to save Tama-ha-ha-ra-ha-ha, but life is like trousers, full of little sticky patches.

EPISODE 9

By Mel Croucher

A haha, ha, ahem, ooh, ah, ha, ssnft, that's better. Somehow, the little black box that has been sending out waves of laughter (not to mention ripples of mirth and trickles of bladder contents), has ceased to have effect. And I bet you can't guess who is responsible. No? Well, go take a look in the mirror. You are responsible. That's right. You, the readership of this ancient Kashdispensarian magazine. And how is this possible? I will tell you. It seems that long, long ago, when Kashdispensa was called Earth, and you all worshipped the iron (and so-are-you-ron) goddess Maggot Hatcher, some bright spark published a Readers' Questionnaire in order to discover which was the most unpopular item infesting this very publication. And can you imagine who came out with egg on her face, chips on her shoulder, ham in her dialogue and sausage up her tutu? Correct. Hole in one. 'Tamara Knight' has generated massive amounts of what that well-known typographical error for a breakfast cereal Ciarán Brennan called *Negative Feedback*. Fortunately for Tamara and my electronic self, this Negative Feedback has seared through the space-time continuum like a razor blade hidden in a bar of soap, and counteracted the good vibrations of the black box.

As all socio-physicists know, once Negative Feedback is let loose, nothing can stop it. Indeed, my historical records prove that it was Negative Feedback which caused the collapse of your entire civilisation. After laughter was abolished and all of your clowns, poets, hucksters, buskers and other subversives were killed, all colour was stolen. And after colour, they stole the light. And after light, they stole your souls. And all that was left in your world was greed, oppression and Country 'n' Western music. And the meek did not inherit the earth, instead they were forced to eat the dirt. Yes sir. Personally, I blame God for re-releasing The Creation on Compact Disc, and privatising Forgiveness.

But that is then and this is now, so let's get on with it. Tamara Knight, the only perfect human being ever to emerge from a test tube, is lying prone, her breath coming in short hot pants. I, on the other hand, am lying through my teeth. Every other living creature in this space-travelling circus tent seems to be dead. Exploded offal is trickling from the tightrope and trapeze, coagulated gore steaming underfoot, all creatures great and small having laughed themselves to pie filler. We are still fixed by the baleful stare of the Red Nosed Clone, but as he has laughed his head off, I don't expect any more trouble from him. No, I expect all of our troubles to focus on the fact that we have lost our power source of animal manure and are drifting aimlessly through a sector of the galaxy inhabited by nothing but . . . nothing!

'What shall we do, Louse?' gasps Tamara, catching her perfect breaths, letting them go and catching them again. 'How are we going to get to wish upon Astar, so you can be transformed into an all-male human being with a smallish moustache and some leisureware – thereby allowing us to live happily ever after?' The solution escapes me, but after mopping it up I decide that we must make a methodical search of the Big Top, and try to find an alternative source of propulsion. By my calculation, if we rely on Tamara producing enough fuel to propel the dung-gas rockets, it will take a little over 69,000 years to reach Astar, and although my heroine is young for her age, she may look a little saggy at the edges by the time we make planetfall. So, let's get searching before the sagging direction of her perfect female attributes read half-past-six as the crows feet fly.

'All we have come up with is a whip, a set of bondage manacles and a crate of lager . . . '

I am sorry to report to you that after an extensive rummage through the sawdust of the ring, the straw of cages and the shag pile carpet of the hospitality suite, all we have come up with is a whip, set of bondage manacles and a crate of lager. This is no good at all. I mean we can't even have a party with it until I am transformed into a human being. Tamara is slumped miserably in a heap, and the heap is slumped miserably in a corner. She is toying with a can of lager, casually sniffing it with one perfect nostril, idly rolling it up and down her perfect leg, plucking at its stupid little ring-pull with a perfect forefinger, and . . . ye gods! A shower of golden raindroplets whooshes out, jetting and foaming into the pressurised dung-gas reactor. The intergalactic circus tent lurches violently, spinning on its own axis. What an incredible discovery; fizzy lager propulsion! Now I know how Thomas Edison must have felt when he picked up his first light bulb, put it to his ear, and said 'Mary had a little lamb.'

Hello folks! It is a wee while later, and several cans lighter. Tamara is drunk, but that's fine by me. I would prefer to have her in a compliant mood when I transmogrify into homo sapiens moustachioque toga rumpopumpo. Our craft needs one can of lager every ten minutes to keep on steaming – as a matter of fact, so does Tamara! We have just docked in the bay of the USS Otis Redding in order to pick up some auxiliary power, and I have joined in the party spirit by disguising myself as a bubble of spit on Tamara's perfect chin. She is playful as a puppy, and giggles her request to beam aboard, which is grumpily granted by a paunchy old retired admiral, name of James T Kirk.

'James T Kirk fixes us with a blind, violet-veined eyeball, puckers his toothless mouth, and snarls . . . '



'Permission to come aboard Sir', she trills merrily. 'Chekov!' the old man responds. 'Well, there's no need to be like that, I only came to ask if I could borrow a set of jump leads and an extension cable to get me to Astar. Shall we say about 42 million miles long. Please. Sir?' James T Kirk fixes us with a blind, violet-veined eyeball, puckers his toothless mouth, and snarls, 'Sulu! Uhura!' 'Oh dear', says Tamara, backing away, 'I think he's going to be sick.' The old man is getting very agitated and I reckon Tamara's diagnosis is quite right, he is about to throw up. 'Uhura! Uhura!' he sputters. What a disgusting, pathetic wreck he is, I think I will instruct Tamara to cheer him up a bit. Use the black box, my little tipsy angel. Give him one decent laugh before we murder him, hi-jack his spacecraft, dodge the copyright litigation and finish the series. And let us pray that the Negative Feedback from the readers will save us again.

Hahahahi there! Wehehe've done it! Thanks folks! We have Warp Factor Three, Max Factor too, and Channel Number Four. Bingo! En route for our return to the fabled wishing planet of Astar. What a fun time we've been having, the love of my life and me, We've been scraping Captain Kirk off the control room walls, and ladling him into little glass jars marked 'Preserved Fruit'. And we've been playing hide and seek around Tamara's body, with me disguised as a freckle. And now we are lazily scanning the USS Otis Redding's film archive, to try and find me a suitable moustache for the Great Moment. I rather fancy one like my old pal Adolf Hitler used to wear. Did I ever tell you about me and Hitler? No? Well, we've got a little while before we land, so I'll fill you in. I it was in parallel universe Number Nine, as I recall.

I first met Kiss-curl Hitler when he was lead singer with the Bleeding Nazis, playing in the cellar of the Rat-Kellar, planet Finchley. That must have been about 1933: just after half seven, modern time. We had a few beers, and I told him I was working for Red Wedge, but the pay was lousy. I also mentioned the fact that I knew Jimi Hendrix a few episodes ago, but he wasn't impressed. Those Nazis were really something! Great rhythm, excellent visuals, *very* loud, and with a really well-organised fan club. Hitler had just invented this new robotic dance called the Goosestep. It was all the rage. He was into drugs of course. They all were. And by the time he got the residency on Little and Large he had become a bit unpredictable. You know the sort of thing; frothing at the mouth, harranguing the audience, biting the heads of pickled beetroot on stage.

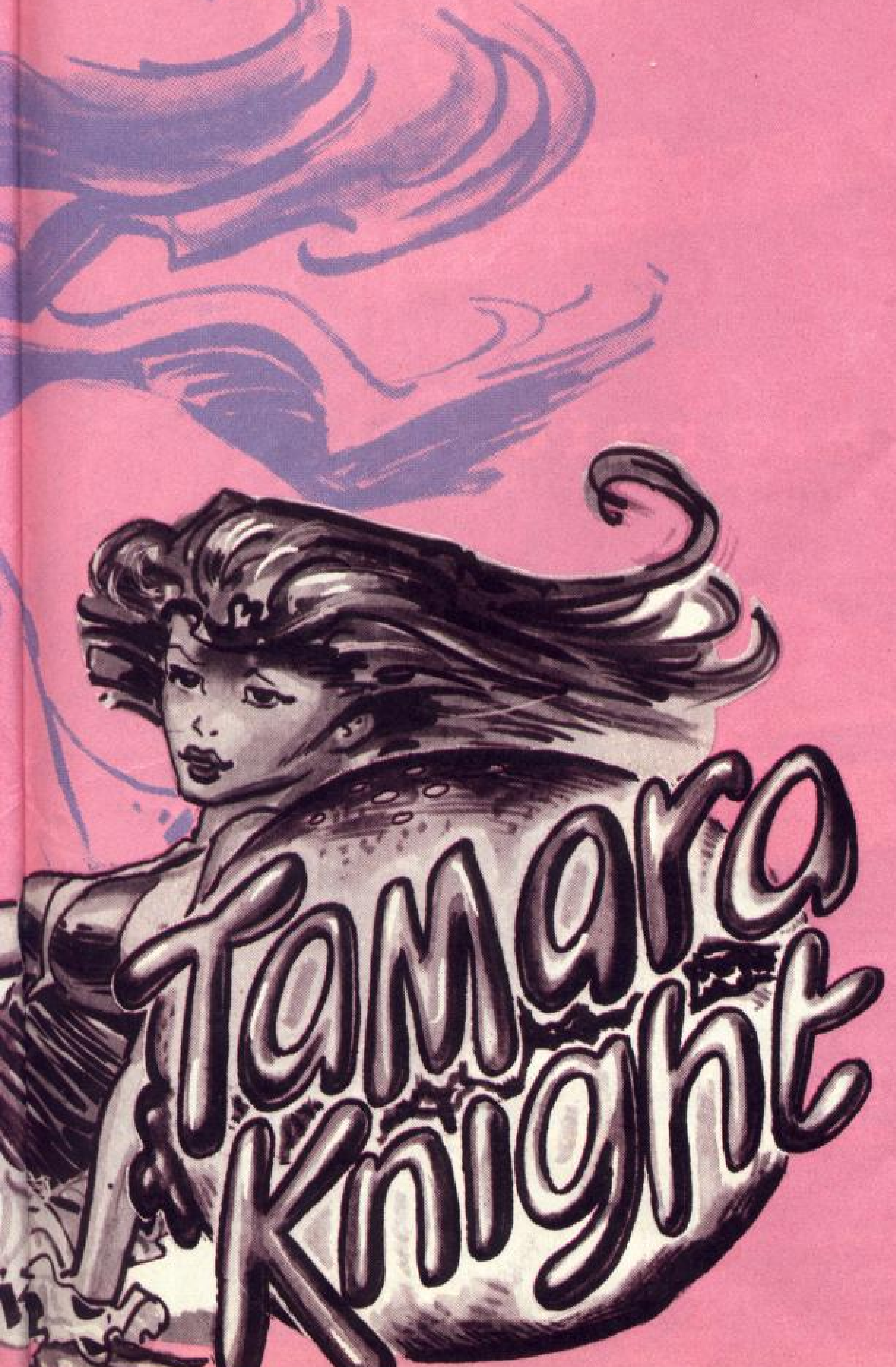
'Hitler was ambitious. he wanted a big band.'

There was Fats Goering on bass, 'Emperor' Hirohito and Benny 'Duke' Mussolini on keyboards, with Keith Moon on drums. But Hitler was ambitious. He wanted a Big Band. 'Louse', he would say, 'Today Leicester Polytechnic Student's Union, Tomorrow Ze Vorld!' Well, he bought up an amazing amount of second-hand hardware to take on tour, from Emerson, Lake and Panzer, and set about the famous 1979-95 World Tour. He went down a bomb in Coventry as I recall, and they still talk about the Nagasaki Open Air Free Festival, when Hitler first brought his Japanese girlfriend Little Eva Braun in, for a duet on her Number One hit, 'Do The Concentration.'

But then punk came along, and Hitler made his first big mistake. He did a cover version of 'Lilli Marlene' with Pearl Harbour and the B-52s, and switched labels from Stiff Arm to Nu Wave. I knew he was going off his trolley by then. He was snorting herring, and I expect you already know the story where he and Little Eva got wrecked at The Bunker and poured petrol over themselves during the last verse of 'Heil Joe.' The band broke up because of musical differences, and Hitler gradually drifted into obscurity. I heard he was offered a bit of work by Paul Simon on the Gracesudetenland Tour, but he turned it down. He was a bit old-fashioned, I suppose, but he objected to mixing rock music and politics. The last I heard, Adolf Kiss-curl Hitler was playing piano in a little singles bar on the planet Ludlow, but I couldn't swear to the truth of that. What I do know is that he had the most attractive smallish moustache I have ever longed for.

So there we are then. That's it. The end of my story. Well, to be perfectly honest with you, the end of my contract. This is a democratic publication after all, and I have been terminated by your very own popular request. Your Negative Feedback that saved us at the beginning and near the middle of this episode has turned out be all-consuming. You always knew that we would wish upon Astar, didn't you, and that I would be transformed from a miniature neutron bomb into an all-male human being, with a smallish moustache and some leisureware. Well, I was. I've travelled a great deal since the last paragraph, met some interesting life forms, paid my way when I could, cheated and lied when I couldn't. All in all I haven't been a great success. But there again, I haven't been a great failure either. There are a few things I never realised about humanity though. Like the fact that you can go bald while still suffering from adolescent zits and dandruff and that I find it increasingly difficult to find work these days, but I expect something will turn up.

What's that you say? Tamara? Oh, I had almost forgotten about her. She died from cancer a while back, but what the hell. she was just some girl I used to know. The hell with her. What did you expect, a happy ending? You just keep on playing with your electronic games and filling in questionnaires while you can. Because real life, my friends, is an utter bitch.



THE END!

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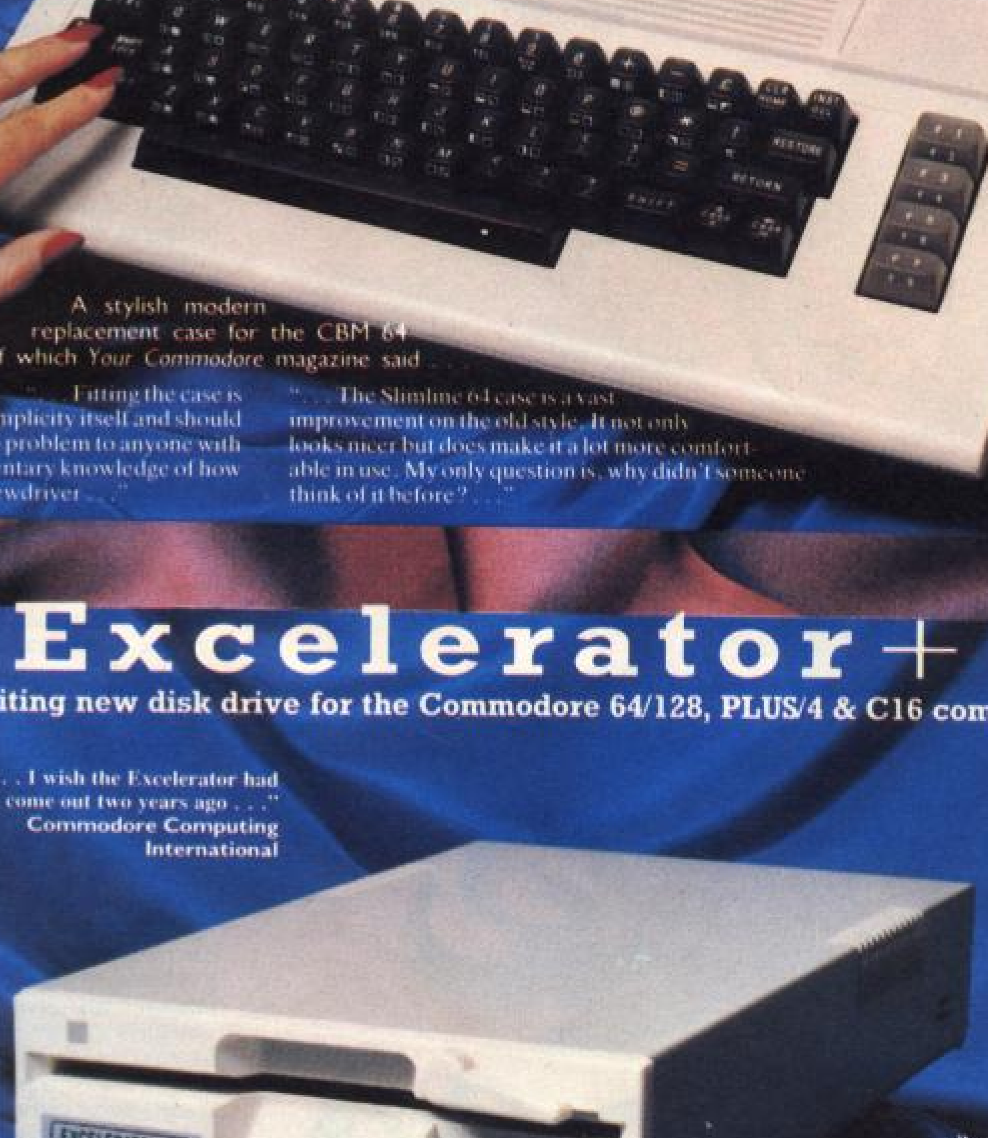
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ZZAP! WINNERS! RESULTS

MINIATURE MINIONS

Up for grabs in the Melbourne House Shadows of Mordor competition was a boxed set of hand-painted Citadel miniatures and a copy of the sequel to the acclaimed adventure, Lord of the Rings. Judging the many entries that came flooding in was particularly difficult, but the first prize eventually went to **Scott Cornish** from Bristol. Fifty of the closest runners up each receive a copy of the game, and they are . . .

Chris Nelson, Scotland, PA2 8QS; Andrew Bull, Sussex RH11 8UQ; Aidan Donnelly, Dublin, Eire; David Errington, Tyne & Wear, NE28 6PG; Mr N.J Webley, Glostershire, GL51 8AX; Steven Miller, Lancs, OL6 8BX; William Chetwynd, Warwickshire, CV10 0DR; Paul Bosett, Peterbough, PE2 8QE; Lee Price, Warwickshire, CV11 6UQ; John Haigh, South Yorkshire, S71 1XA; Gorden Smith, Scotland, ML3 7XX; Mr I Howarth, Cornwall, TR15 2QU; Fiona Bissett, London, N14 5PT; Andrew Potts, West Midland, DY6 8NY; Andrew Russell, West Sussex, PA22 74X; James Hurdich, Kent, TN2 5LQ; Tak Chi Lee, Bedfordshire, LU2 0PD; Daniel Hargreaves, London, S.E.3; Scott Purdy, Dorset, BH15 3RS; Peter Bridgeland, Essex, RM11 2RH; Ian Britton, Cardiff, CF4 8LX; Abid Hussain, Glasgow, G41 2DE; Phillip Coe, Wiltshire, SN1 3PU; Greig Kobiela, Strathclyde, G67 4JQ; Paul Spittlehouse, Humberside, HU12 9AF; Daniel Smyth, Hants, SO4 3PJ; David Knox, Edinburgh, EH16 5HQ; Richard Higgs, Berkshire, RG3 6GA; Scott Belhell, Cornwall, IR11 5AW; Darren Butler, Co Louth, Ireland; Daniel Havardi, Middlesex, HA5 3AQ; L Custard, Bristol, BS18 4DW; J Prados, Friarnet, N11 3BS; Morgan Eves, Norfolk, NR10 4JW; G Beddows, Staffs, WS15 2SX; Phillip Peel, Cheshire, CW8 2NF; David Jeffreys, Swansea, SA1 7AL; Colin Gillespie, Aberdeenshire, AB5 4JT; Paul Maund, Hampshire, P05 4DR; Keith Berry, Lancs, FY7 7LE; Dean Scott, Northants, NN17 2PW; Mr Stephen Clover, Berkshire, RG11 9TU; Andy Van Wyngaeroen, Belgium, 30 10; Tom Stoub, 55 g5 AS Leende, The Netherlands; Daniel Polwarth, Essex, IG8 7RG; John Overall, Essex SS7 5XQ; Roy Lewis, Lancashire, PR4 1YA; David Hardy, Nottingham, NG5 4LA; Ronald Stewart, Cleveland, TS9 6LU; Adrian Green, Northampton, NN3 LG2.



▶ Scott Cornish's ideal minion

THE ARTWORK HAS LANDED

The ubiquitous wordsearch was once again brought into operation for the Hewson Eagles competition. The first prize was a stunning piece of original artwork from the game's advertisement – and the first prize-worthy monogram out of the trilby was that of Birmingham's **J Wardell**. The following 30 runners up each receive a copy of the game and an Eagles poster . . .

L D'Arcy, Surrey, KTS 95D; Paul Picknell, East Sussex, TN39 5HN; Desmond Neale, West Midlands, WS1 2HR; Robert Stock, South Glamorgan, CF6 4NY; James Dufy, Coventry, CV3 6HS; A C Porrit, Cleveland, TS26 9QN; Anil Menon, Middlesex, TW14 OAL; Omar Khan, Essex, IG1 1ET; Mark Mulford, Essex, CO12 3TR; Philip Wynn, Lancs, WN8 9BD; Tony David, Kent, ME10 3AD; Adam J F Kells, Birmingham, B32 1QT; Paul Hotchkiss, Shropshire, TF3 2JP; Boroere Kerkelaan 31, Netherlands, 1851-HG; Miss J Murdy, London, N16 5DS; Chris Varvel, Norfolk, NR7 8JX; Paul Bayford, Norfolk, NR4 6TB; T J Hoggarth, Warwick, CV35 9EW; Allan Dean, Scotland, IV30 3ET; Guy Lambert, Warks, CV11 6FP; Mohinder Kang, West Midlands, B70 6QP; Nicholas Twinn, Co Durham, DH2 3ET; Eric Morton, London, SE25 5PL; Matthew Brimelow, Cheshire, SK16 5LL; Ben Pearne, South Wales, CF31 1QA; Jonathan Dyson, Leicester, LE2 3 D; Bradley Ashton, Essex, RM3 0SU; Garry Barrett, Staffs, DE13 0XU; Paul Slee, Barnstaple, EX31 7HP; Lawrence Bowyer, Berkshire, RG7 3NN.

BECOME AN OINK! SUPERSTAR

Your chance for superstardom (plus a trough-full of OINK! goodies) came in Issue 27 where you had to spot the differences between two Pete's Pimple pictures. The lucky winner gets a trip to the OINK! offices, and will feature in an OINK! photo story. He also wins a T-Shirt, a mug and a copy of the game . . . his name? **Mark Fletcher** of Glasgow. Twenty lucky runners up will each receive a copy of the OINK! game and an OINK! mug for their troubles. They are . . .

Michael Young, Essex, RM8 2YJ; Damian Spendlow, Derbyshire, S40 3DF; Keith Bevens, Cheshire, M33 2AP; Adrian Maddocks, Derby, DE2 7AG; Gavin Kagan, West Midlands, B95 6AX; Paul Malcolm, Co Durham DH3 2HA; David MacLauchlan, Somerset, BA22 9LF; Paul Hadrill, Buckinghamshire, MK6 5DY; Kelly Richardson, Northants, NN10 9UE; Mr T R Broadhurst, Cheshire, WA3 6PT; Mark Taylor, Gwent, NP6 6ED; Andrew Buchanan, Renfrewshire, PA14 5JR; Raymond Vicary, Cornwall, TR13 8UG; Mathew Brimelow, Cheshire, SK16 5LL; Richard Middlemiss, Sheffield, S18 6UQ; Gary Partridge, Walsall, WS2 8TU; Nicholas Edgecombe, Cornwall, TR4 9DR; David Murphy, Buckinghamshire, MK6 2DF; Andrew Sobryan, Middlesex, TW7 5HX; 702 CPL G S Sporne, Northern Ireland, BFPO 807.

CHART VOTING DRAW WINNERS

WINNER (£40 worth of software plus ZZAP! T-Shirt): Richard Burton, Helston, Cornwall

RUNNERS UP (ZZAP! T-Shirt and Cap): Shane Dean, Northwich, Cheshire; Stuart Scattergood, Deeside, Clwyd; D Caldwell, Stretford, Manchester; Simon Glister, Totton, Southampton

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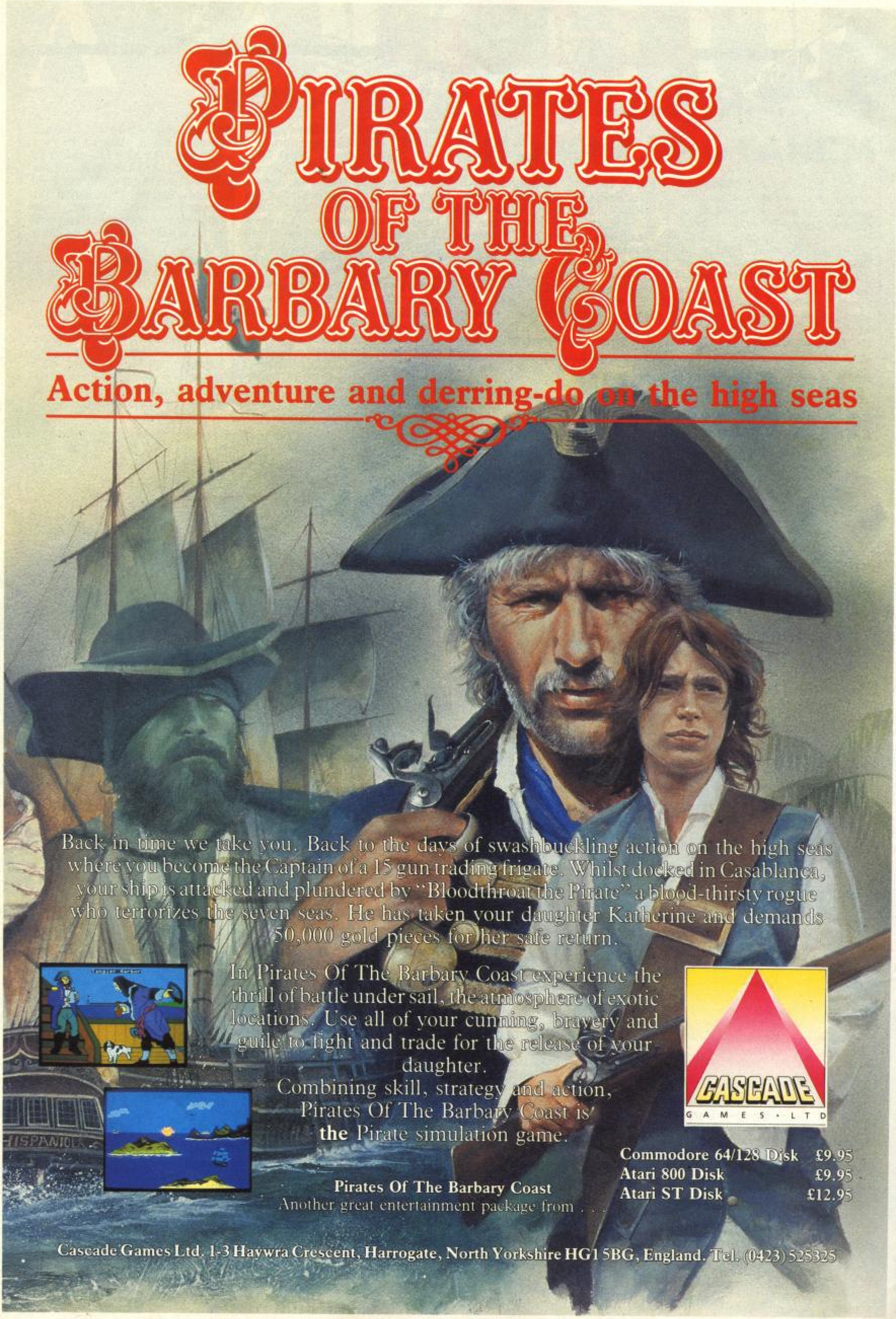
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871,500 Martin Coyle, Clifton, Notts
822,500 Stephen Lund, Bradford, W Yorks

ACE (Cascade)
121,550 Fu Sang Li, Crewe, Cheshire
100,000 Andrew Welch, Stevenage, Herts
83,380 M Horsey, Waltham Abbey, Kent

ALIENS (Electric Dreams)
126,500 Paul Griffiths, Llandudno, N Wales
52,725 Sean Meadows, North End, Portsmouth
23,950 George Dick, Invergordon, Scotland

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)
14,582,700 Jean-Claude Zeh, Hoenheim, France
9,334,400 Richard Hudson, Copmanthorpe, York
8,917,300 Tony Shoreman, Billington, Lancs

ANTIRIAD (Palace Software)
Completed In . . .
3:06 M Gooday, Bishop's Stortford, Herts
3:40 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs
3:52 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks

ARKANOID (Imagine)
1,262,190 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
979,600 Paul Stapley, Whitby, N Yorks
913,090 Steve Pratt, Leighton Buzzard, Beds

ARMOURDILLO (Code Masters)
21,000 P Griffiths, Llandudno, N Wales
11,300 Adie Griffiths, Crowborough, E Sussex
9,200 Chris Mclean, Helsby, Cheshire

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY (Gremlin Graphics)
51,223 casey Gallacher, Swallowfield, Reading
18,000 Sanjay Vaghela, Rugby, Warks
16,876 Simon Jeavons, Yeadon, W Yorks

BARBARIAN (Palace Software)
21,200 Chris McLean, Helsby, Cheshire
16,300 David Barker, Bedfont, Middx
15,700 Anthony Finn, Eaglescliffe, Cleveland

BEAMRIDER (Activision)
980,420 Steve Jarratt, ZZAP! Towers
272,174 Steve Tye, Kidderminster, Worcs

BMX SIMULATOR (Codemasters)
4,260 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

BOMBJACK (Elite)
4,052,870 Jez Foy, Tring, Herts
3,264,600 Wayne Winter, Lawrence Weston, Bristol
1,384,130 casey Gallacher, Reading, Berks

BREAKTHRU (US Gold)
246,000 Vincent Old, Wellingborough, Northants
138,050 Paul Gibson, Sunderland, Tyne And Wear
111,900 Gary Rice, Colchester, Essex

BULLDOG (Gremlin Graphics)
1,207,200 Tony Shoreman, Billington, Lancs
1,109,500 casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading
1,108,900 Brett Warburton, Hollingworth, Cheshire

CAULDRON II (Palace Software)
1,508,550 Cliff Nobresa, St Helier, Jersey
153,750 John Reynolds, Duxford, Cambridge
132,400 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

COBRA (Ocean)
285,900 Philip Stevens, Alfreton, Derbyshire
93,400 Patrick Green, Burnley, Lancs
89,200 Stephen Wildridge, Great Sutton, S Wirral

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668,995 Richard Hardbattle, Nuneaton, Warks
649,100 Aeron Lindley, Messingham, S Humberside

DAN DARE (Virgin)
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7,397 Scott Fulfitt, Endover, Devon
7,297 Shaun Alcock, Tyldesley, Manchester

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9,840 Howard Worton, Southwark, London
8,870 Gary Shield, Stockport, Cheshire

DELTA (Thalamus)
1,258,430 Colin Redfern, Heywood, Lancs
895,850 Aidon Donnelley, Kilmacud, Dublin
371,220 Jonathan Wood, Edgeware, Middx

DRAGON'S LAIR (Software Projects)
63,997 Sean Walker (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
35,410 Martin Coyle, Clifton, Notts
33,750 Simon Cole, Chelmsford, Essex

DUET (Elite)
168,170 Fu Sang Li, Crewe, Cheshire
137,520 Gary Smith, Basingstoke, Hants
113,520 Paul Molyneux, Doncaster, S Yorks

ENDURO RACER (Activision)
2,227,475 Dale Somerset, Wadsley Bridge, Sheffield
1,857,098 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear
1,299,832 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE (Software Projects)
92,742 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
78,538 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
76,584 Ian Sullivan, Forest Hill, London

EXPRESS RAIDER (US Gold)
68,450 Gavin Shute, Aylesbury, Bucks
42,500 Chris McLean, Helsby, Cheshire

THE EQUALISER (The Power House)
20,620 Dean Stinton, Botley, Southampton
13,120 Graeme Crichton, Irvine, Ayrshire
7,980 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

FEUD (Bulldog)
87% David Barker, Bedfont, Middx
44% Richard Morgan, Fordingbridge, Hampshire

FIRELORD (Hewson)
145,205 Richard Pargeter, Coventry, W Mids
143,160 Daniel Osbourne, Hornsea, N Humbs
116,805 Damian Ward, Harrogate, W Yorks

FIRETRACK (Electric Dreams)
835,640 Darren Cole, Chingford, London
664,960 Kristian Bruun, Copenhagen, Denmark
527,290 Johnny Larsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

FIST II (Melbourne House)
1,753,000 Steven Rolf, Kettering, Northants
1,560,800 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks
1,220,000 Steven Guilfoyle, Oldham

FIST II TOURNAMENT (Melbourne House)
7,506,000 Shahjahan Alhassan, Slough, Berks
6,012,300 Steven Rolf, Kettering, Nothants
5,096,000 Kevin Lennard, St Helier, Sark

FLOYD THE DROID (Ariolasoft)
11,830 Sean Walker, (Runsoft), Australia
7,970 Matthew Williams, Yeovil, Somerset
6,040 Sam Shields, Canterbury, Kent

GALIVAN (Imagine)
287,000 Chris McLean, Helsby, Cheshire

GAUNTLET: DEEPER DUNGEONS (US Gold)
Merlin The Wizard
8,787,195 Asher Rashid, Thornaby, Cleveland
4,350,297 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol
4,308,061 Michael Robertson, Stirlingshire, Scotland

Thor The Warrior
4,678,932 David Taylor, Alvington, Glos
3,974,521 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol
2,999,320 Richard Hardbattle, Nuneaton, Warks

Questor the Elf
2,497,341 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol

Thyra the Valkyrie
818,692 Paul Hollington, Hullbridge, Essex

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS (Elite)
920,800 casey Gallacher, Swallowfield, Reading
531,890 Christian Major, Norwich, Norfolk
456,060 Chris Goodswen, Norwich, Norfolk

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,301,850 Mark Cunningham, Newtown Abbey, Co Antrim
1,204,150 Paul Wheatley, S Norwood, London
1,059,890 Simon Cole, Chelmsford, Essex

GUNSHIP (Microprose)
278,785 Richard Mellor, Bridgwater, Somerset
265,990 David Nicol, Heworth, York
262,960 Mark Logan, Inverness, Scotland

HEAD OVER HEELS (Ocean)
70,000 Ciaran Brennan, ZZAP! Towers
69,360 Darren Cole, Chingford, London

HERCULES (Alpha/Omega)
1,159,880 Thomas Broers, Lundflata, Norway
815,920 Nils-Olav Barvag, 6770 Nordfjordeid, Norway
755,500 Robert Hemphill, Port Glasgow

HERO (Firebird)
177,762 Patrick Lammers, 1400 Nivelles, Belgium
125,324 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

I, BALL (Firebird)
47,760 Marc Spence, Leeds 10
21,300 Stuart Scattergood, address not included
10,030 Alistair Crichton, Irvine, Ayrshire

INTERNATIONAL KARATE (System 3)
382,250 Steven Bodey, Perth, Australia
336,750 Peter Hunt, Hook, Hants
335,220 F Lapp, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST (Pandora)
1,143,300 M Booman, Oud-Beijerland, The Netherlands
1,049,800 Frank the Menhir, Herts
995,600 Aeron Lindley, Messingham, S Humberside

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft)
599,760 George Bray, Armthorpe, Doncaster
349,520 Colin Redfern, Heywood, Lancs
204,390 Jonathan Wood, Edgeware, Middx

JAILBREAK (Konami)
195,500 Paul Gibson, Sunderland, Tyne And Wear
102,500 Malcolm Redfern, Preston, Lancs
89,500 Stephen Lund, Bradford, W Yorks

JEEP COMMAND (Bug Byte)
303,990 J Gheorghisor (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
250,350 Dave Breed, Cullercoats, Tyne & Wear
227,380 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
Total:
68,355 Hassan Mussad, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
67,620 Paul Ratje, Newport, Isle of Wight
66,345 Simon Wilcox, Ipswich, Suffolk

KNUCKLEBUSTERS (Melbourne House)
11,700 Craig Bent, Failsworth, Manchester
6,300 Steve Quinnell, New Eltham, London
5,700 Bharat Vaghela, Rugby, Warks

KRAKOUT (Gremlin Graphics)
21,184,770 Michael Eikmans, The Netherlands
12,740,800 Dave & Brett Warburton, Cheshire
3,068,500 Steven Packer, Chelmsford, Essex

KUNG-FU MASTER (US Gold)
4,785,852 Liam Chivers, Battenhall, Worcs
4,385,990 Stephen Pennel, Fordingbridge, Hants
3,802,983 Andrew Dallyn, Braughton, Devon

LEADER BOARD (US Gold/Access)
NOVICE
-39 Robert Smith, Edgbaston, Birmingham
-25 Julian Smith, Halesowen, West Mids
-25 Christopher Lamb, Liverpool

AMATEUR
-27 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
-23 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-23 G McKenzie, Dunbar, E Lothian

PROFESSIONAL
-33 Philip Astley, Kingswinford, W Mids
-24 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-22 Robin Evans, Tring, Herts

LEADERBOARD: EXECUTIVE EDITION (US Gold/Access)
NOVICE
-21 Stuart MacKissack, Knightswood, Glasgow
-14 C Knowles, Sydenham, London

PROFESSIONAL
-30 Steve Jones, North End, Portsmouth
-18 Stewart Rogers, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

LIGHTFORCE (FTL)
3,239,250 Richard Burgman, Seaford, Essex
2,526,975 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
2,296,360 Taki Liberopoulos, Athens, Greece



HEROES

MARIO BROTHERS (Ocean)
449,380 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
252,620 Ozz, New Eltham, London

MERCENARY: THE SECOND CITY (Novagen)
7,942,196cr Russell Wallace, Dunoughaire, Co Dublin
7,442,000cr Brian Mainwaring, Talke Pits, Staffs
7,086,000cr Glenn Haworth, Swallow, Lincs

METROCROSS (US Gold)
311,700 Louis Farnham, Twickenham, Middlesex
157,800 Gary Smith, Basingstoke, Hants
90,000 David Bond, Swindon, Wilts

MILK RACE (Mastertronic)
7,794 Gary Smith, Basingstoke, Hants

MISSION AD (Odin)
59,455 Mark Craft, Bearwood, Bournemouth
48,670 David Barker, Feltham, Middx
36,475 Jez Foy, Tring, Herts

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (Databyte)
1,127,500 W Drew, Brisbanem, Australia
412,450 Adam Trewella, Stapleton, Bristol
398,450 Ozz, New Eltham, London

MUTANTS (Ocean)
51,644,500 Adie Bonner, Southbourne
31,025,750 Gareth Williams, Swansea, W Glamorgan
26,460,850 Gavin Richardson, Swinton, Manchester

NEMESIS (Konami)
19,346,400 Stephen Grady, Wigan, Lancs
12,341,200 Terry Bourdram, Colindale, London
11,241,100 Stephen Ross, Ryde, Isle of Wight

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK (Martech)
12,770 Mike Thomas, Caerphilly, Mid Glam
7,600 Gavin Shute, Aylesbury, Bucks
4,540 Dale Somerset, Wadsley Bridge, Sheffield

NINJA MASTER (Mastertronic)
485,840 Gordon Shearer, Rothes, Morayshire
198,880 Robert Futter, Downham Market, Norfolk
196,315 Michael Pihl, Kumla, Sweden

NOMAD (Ocean)
5,264 John Gheorghisor, (Runsoft), Australia
4,065 Paul Want, Harrogate, N Yorks
3,885 Paul Tudor, Stourbridge, Pedmore

OLLI AND LISSA (Firebird)
19,820 Lee Barker, Northwich, Cheshire
14,898 Stuart Scattergood, address not included
10,000 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs

PANTHER (Mastertronic)
250,900 Liam Chivers, Battenhall, Worcs
215,500 Jason Birnie, Cranleigh, Surrey
200,940 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey

PAPERBOY (Elite)
301,400 Mark Rolf, Kettering, Northants
300,700 John White, Whitefield, Manchester
140,700 Steve Quinnell, New Eltham, London

PARADROID (Hewson)
364,290 Shazad Iqbal, Bury, Lancs
300,850 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness
302,604 Gary Whitta, Chingford, London

PARADROID PLUS (Hewson)
86,500 Brian Yeo, Tarbolton, Ayrshire
63,200 Adam Beabies, Tarbolton, Ayrshire
45,500 Karim Bouali, Tooting, London

PARALLAX (Ocean)
106,850 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
89,300 Jason Birnie, Cranleigh, Surrey
78,400 Adam Pracy, Newton Flotman, Norwich

PARK PATROL (Firebird)
994,990 Simon Jones, Chelmsford, Essex
993,130 Paul Harwood, Penge, London
991,570 Andrew McMinn, Colchester, Essex

POD (Mastertronic)
1,468,440 Karsten Toksvig, 8832 SKAIS, Denmark
1,082,440 Matthew Penn, Ormskirk, Lancashire
919,040 Adam Loxton, Street, Somerset

QUARTET (Activision)
295,385 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
168,100 casey Gallacher, Swallowfield, Reading

RANARAMA (Hewson)
3,358,400 Richard Leadbetter, Witham, Essex
1,822,200 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
1,555,700 Martin Draper, Alfreton, Derby

RIVER RAID (Firebird)
259,235 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

ROCK 'N' WRESTLE (Melbourne House)
3,125,100 Jamie Orridge, Gedling, Nottingham
2,655,200 Alan Smith, Glenrothers, Fife
941,300 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen

SABOTEUR (Durell)
£2,789,600 Gareth Mitchell, Mirfield, W Yorks
£1,175,000 Daniel Maurice, Redland, Bristol
£971,300 Jari Jaakola, Inkeroinen, Finland

SANXION (Thalamus)
1,006,466 Steven Malpass, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs
784,390 Stephen Gandy, Halesowen, W Mids
517,860 Peter Williams, Preston, Lancs

SCOOBY DOO (Elite)
248,600 Sean McDonagh, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear
194,550 Gareth Mackie, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
153,600 Stuart Kelly, Reading, Berks

SHAO-LIN'S ROAD (The Edge)
128,420 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs
36,164 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear
31,430 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

SHOCKWAY RIDER (FTL)
1,524,798 Matthew Phypers, Sunnyhill, Derby
291,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
88,350 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

SILENT SERVICE (US Gold/Microprose)
(TONS SUNK)
910,100 Karsten Tokisuig, Drosselvej 6, Denmark
563,100 Steven Hall, Croughton, N Hants
763,200 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland

SKATE ROCK (Bubble Bus)
288,430 Justin Cole, Huddersfield, W Yorks
239,020 Sean Walker, (Runsoft), Australia
223,280 Stephen Bloor, Nuneaton, Warks

SKY RUNNER (Cascade)
$669,700 John Doyle, Kilmarnoch, Ayrshire
$190,600 Martin Dobson, London E12
$125,500 Peter Hulme, Bishop's Stortford, Herts

SKOOL DAZE (Micromega)
126,910 Anthony Duiker (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
120,780 Gordon Shearer, Rothes, Morayshire
104,340 Scott Moore, Fixby, Huddersfield

SLAMBALL (Americana)
7,462,660 Carleton Shaw, London, N10
5,504,870 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness
4,684,710 Martin Dalton, Rochester, Kent

SLAP FIGHT (Imagine)
111,050 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

SPLIT PERSONALITIES (Domark)
680,400 Mrs L Hayden, London E16
665,200 Mrs J Carroll, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset
505,100 Michael Skelcher, Wentoning, Beds

STAR GLIDER (Rainbird)
110,725 Brian Mainwaring, Talke Pits, Staffs
54,930 Ian Sullivan, Forest Hill, London
46,325 Damian Ward, Harrogate, W Yorks

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
287,763 Nigel Froud, Godalming, Surrey
287,140 Ove Knudseu, 5033 Fyllingsdaleu, Norway
273,667 Per Kjellander, Stenungsund, Sweden

STREET SURFER (Bubble Bus)
21,108 Jonathan Stock, Denton, Northampton
16,270 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
15,811 Adie Griffiths, Crowborough, E Sussex

SUPER CYCLE (US Gold/Epyx)
700,400 Declan Quinn, Bessbrook, Newry Co Down
320,160 A Verhaeghe, Bletchley, Bucks
269,310 Andy Girvan, Corby, Northants

TAU CETI (CRL)
21,055 Andrew Tarski, Dursley, Glos
20,465 Robert Elliot, Middlesbrough, Cleveland
20,440 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

TENTH FRAME (US Gold/Access)
Amateur
279 R Geens, B8470 De Panne, The Netherlands
278 Michael Eley, Wimbourne, Dorset
277 R Guiot, B8470 De Panne, The Netherlands

Professional
233 Neil Taylor, Bracknell, Berks
214 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen
202 Graham Millie, East Harnham, Wilts

TERRA CRESTA (Imagine)
402,100 Michael Dunajew, Adelaide, Australia
371,800 Robert Hemphill, Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire
341,000 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

THRUST (Firebird)
4,182,050 Arlo Swinson, Doncaster, S Yorks
3,500,800 Declan Quinn, Bessbrook, Newry Co Down
3,670,700 Anon, Newry, Co Down

TOY BIZARRE (Activision)
223,420 J D Oliver, Ipswich, Suffolk
144,700 Sherif Salama, Cairo, Egypt
102,900 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

TRAILBLAZER (Gremlin Graphics)
1,123,350 Jason Cooper, Wednesbury, W Mids
1,120,040 Henry Rawlinson, Salisbury, Wilts
828,270 Ian Robinson, Tottenham, London

TRAP (Alligata)
481,900 Lawry Simm, Liverpool L23
429,510 Colin Bayne, Glenrothes, Fife
328,500 Robert Elliot, Middlesborough, Cleveland

UCHI MATA (Martech)
378,760 Mark Sexton, Lancing, W Sussex
353,795 Nicholas Lester, Dudley, W Mids
326,655 D Simmons, Wythenshawe, Manchester

URIDIUM (Hewson)
22,906,385 CN, SP, MD, JK, Marston Green, Birmingham
18,228,125 Andrew Simmonds, Deal, Kent
3,820,020 David Horsburgh, Uddington, Glasgow

URIDIUM PLUS (Hewson)
197,925 Russell Wallace, Co Dublin, Ireland
175,405 Paul Wheatley, S Norwood, London
167,000 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs

VIDEO MEANIES (Mastertronic)
57,798 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

VOIDRUNNER (Mastertronic)
5,403,560 Mick Wall, Hillsborough, Sheffield
4,903,840 Adam Loxton, Street, Somerset
3,800,564 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear

WARHAWK (Firebird)
6,229,526 Glenn Haworth, Swallow, Lincs
4,459,784 Hamish Patel, Northolt, Middlesex
3,322,648 Jamie Orridge, Gedling, Nottingham

WEST BANK (Gremlin Graphics)
210,000 Jon Cullen, Hillgate, Stockport
141,250 Mark Huck, Washington, Tyne & Wear
131,600 James Lavelle, Copmanthorpe, York

WIZARD'S LAIR (Bubble Bus)
154,140 Craig Wills, Taunton, Somerset
152,735 Steven Medcraft, Rayleigh, Essex
133,085 Nik Yarker, Blaby, Leicester

WIZBALL (Ocean)
999,999 M Winston & G Eltringham, Fleetwood, Lancs
999,999 D Fitzgerald & G Ruddock, Liverpool
999,999 Gareth Williams, Swansea, W Glamorgan

WONDER BOY (Activision)
222,030 Jason Langmead, Vale, Guernsey
168,170 Gary Blackledge, Crowborough, E Sussex
153,420 casey Gallacher, Swallowfield, reading
134,370 Tony Exell, Whitley, Reading

XEVIOUS (US Gold)
281,280 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
224,100 Steven Parkes, Newcastle, Australia
196,270 Fintan Brady, Virginia, Ireland

YIE AR KUNG-FU (Imagine)
1,307,000 Gavin Conway, Paisley, Scotland
394,700 M Brown & M Grange, Borrowash, Derby
355,300 Andrew Crowther, Kibworth, leicester

YIE AR KUNG-FU II (Imagine)
288,300 Carl Adams, Tooting, London
183,300 Ian Coulter, Leeds
134,400 Rene Groenewoud, Heerhugowaard, The Netherlands

Z (Rhino)
701,250 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
671,450 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
576,200 Stephen Ross, Ryde, Isle of Wight

ZOLYX (Firebird)
172,161 Mrs Sue McGovern, Leighton Buzzard, Beds
168,375 Hamish Patel, Northolt, Middlesex
157,163 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

ZONE RANGER (Firebird)
18,720 Marc Spence, Leeds 10
14,650 Jonathan Wood, Edgeware, Middx
12,904 Mrs Sue McGovern, Leighton Buzzard, Beds



Applications to the Scorelord should be made on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope, and entries which contain more than three high-scores will not be accepted.

DECEPTOR

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

Hot on the heels of *Transformers* and *Gobots*, comes yet another robotic metamorphological hero – *Deceptor*.

After many years of training by his Elders, Deceptor has now succeeded in mastering the series of transformations that allow him to alter his shape, from swift-moving land vehicle, through robotic alter-ego, to gently hovering aircraft. Now he has to prove his worth by completing a series of hazardous assault courses.

There are four available options, allowing the player to practice, adjust the control settings, view the high-score table and finally start the mission.



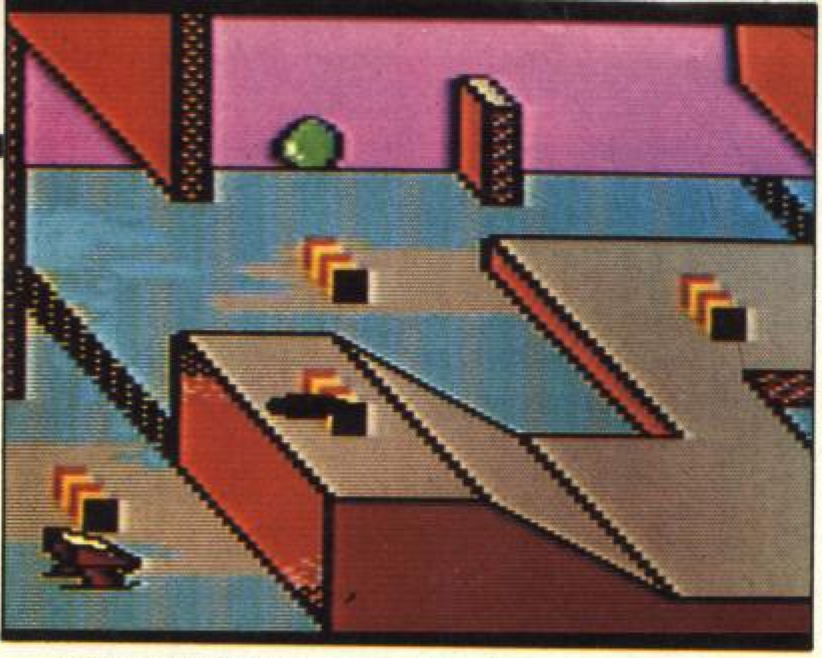
Although the gameplay is simple, offering nothing more than a race against time across an assault course, it's still highly addictive. Negotiating the courses requires a blend of reflexes and quick thinking, and a keen eye is needed during the shoot-out phase. That, combined with the urgency generated by the timer produces an exciting and mentally stimulating challenge. It's a shame that the multi-load cassette version is so frustratingly awkward – the way Deceptor **is structured means that more time is spent rewinding and waiting than playing. On the other hand, the disk version is great and well worth looking out for.**



Having seen the ad for Deceptor, **I was expecting the worst, maybe because of the quality of the previous** Transformer **type games. However, I'm pleasantly surprised. The gameplay harks back to the old** Zaxxon **style, but from a more oblique view. The forced perspective graphics are a little crude, but they portray the action well, and the transformation sequence is well executed. The game's only ugly feature is the sound, with the title tune being a little 'bassy', and the effects instantly forgettable. This is well worth a look – especially the disk version, as the multi-load on the cassette version reduces the enjoyment somewhat.**

The Deceptor's alien world takes the shape of a three-dimensional, horizontally scrolling, forced perspective assault course. The objective is to reach the Guardian at the end of each assault course and destroy it before the time limit expires. The player has unlimited Deceptors to complete the task, with the mission only ending when the time runs out.

Throughout the level there are square packs which yield one missile (used to combat a Guardian) and ten seconds of extra time when touched. When a Guardian is encountered, Deceptor reverts back to his human form and uses a hand-held blaster to despatch the creature. Shots are aimed using the joystick, with the resulting explosions giving the only indication of a shot's accuracy. When the Guardian is destroyed the time left is converted to bonus points and Deceptor progresses to the next, more difficult sector.

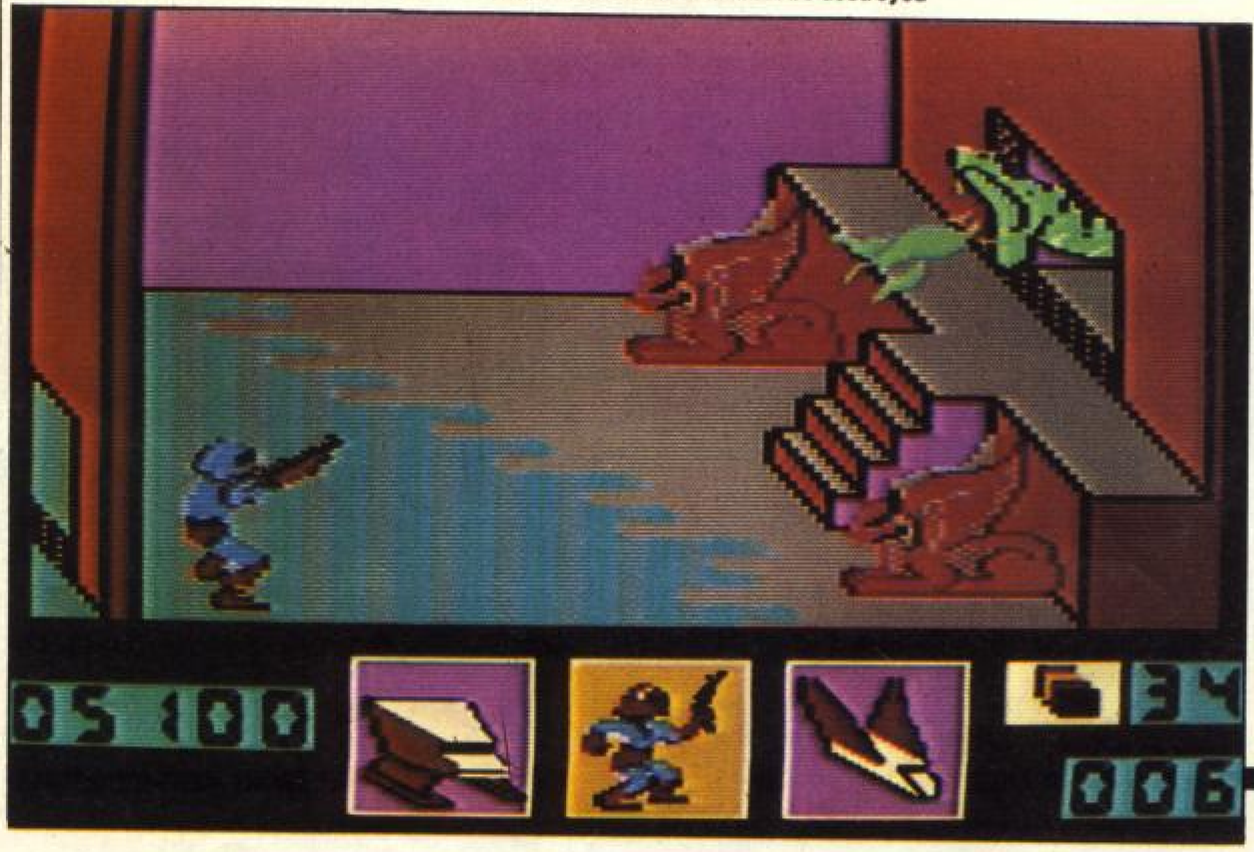


▲ Just part of the vast landscape that Deceptor must negotiate in order to complete his mission



This issue's 'Odd game of the month' prize goes to Deceptor. **It's a cross between** Marble Madness, Zaxxon **and** Transformers **– honest! The perspective graphics work pretty well and a good feeling of a solid, three dimensional world is generated. The** Deceptor's **metamorphosis sequence is also quite impressive, but I ultimately found myself setting the transformation control to the 'off' position, as it intrudes on the action too much. The presentation of the disk version is superb, although the ability to alter the control settings is a nice, but somewhat ineffective addition. I'm not too sure about the appeal of the cassette version, but on disk,** Deceptor's **a winner.**

▼ Before Deceptor can cross over to the second level, the fire-breathing Guardian of Level One must be destroyed



DISK

PRESENTATION 90%
Plenty of options to alter the gameplay, plus the ability to save out the high scores. A practice and demo mode are also included.

GRAPHICS 80%
An effective three-dimensional landscape and some suitably alien sprites. The transformation sequence is especially neat.

SOUND 69%
The unusual soundtrack and spot effects add to the alien atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Addiction sets in as soon as the control method and perspective become familiar.

LASTABILITY 75%
Plenty of screens and enough variety to provide a lasting challenge.

OVERALL 80%
An original and unusual variation on the transforming robot theme.

CASSETTE

PRESENTATION 76%
Includes all the features of the disk, except for the high-score save option. Unfortunately the multi-load is far too intrusive.

GRAPHICS 80%
See disk.

SOUND 69%
See disk.

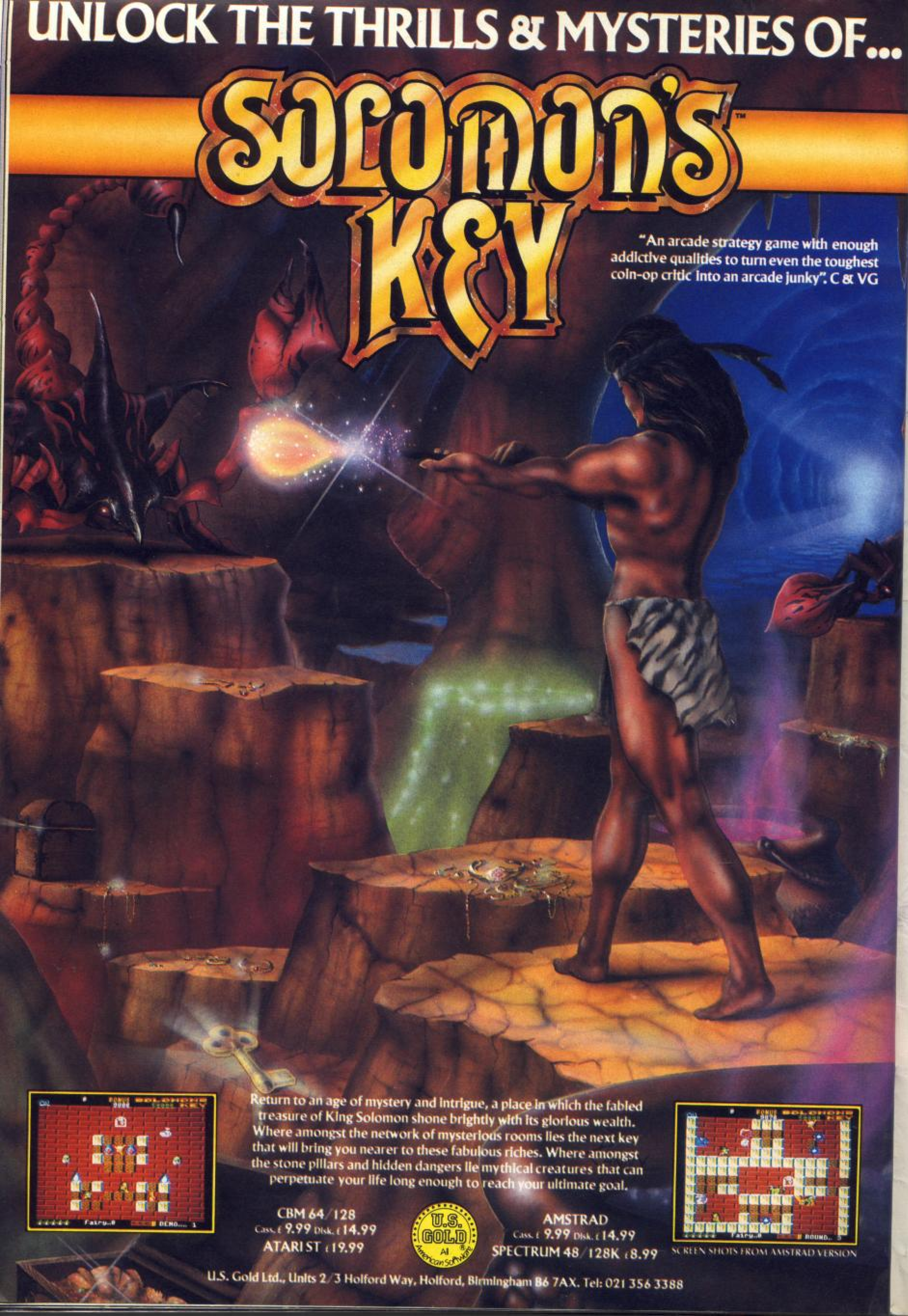
HOOKABILITY 62%
The tricky control method and cumbersome multi-load system is a hurdle, but perseverence reaps its own reward.

LASTABILITY 70%
Plenty of action-packed screens, but having to rewind the cassette after every game might prove too much for the impatient.

OVERALL 72%
An original and unusual variation on the transforming robot theme, unfortunately marred by a clumsy loading system.




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DEATHWISH III

Gremlin Graphics, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick with keys

New York folk can rest easy in their beds once again. The reason? Paul Kersey's back in town! Charles Bronson's vigilante character from the infamous Michael Winner films surfaces on the '64 to continue his one-man fight against crime and injustice.

Our people's hero is armed with a 475 Magnum hand-gun, a pump-action shotgun, a sub-machine gun and, to cap it all, a shoulder-held rocket launcher. Each weapon is brought into play by pressing the control key to cycle through the armoury. The weapon in use is pictured at the bottom of the screen, together with its remaining ammunition.

New York is displayed as flick-screen backdrops, inhabited by all manner of New Yorkers, from thugs and punks to grannies, police and even prostitutes.

Whenever a street intersection is met, Kersey turns to face in any of four directions, with the background scene altering accordingly. A map of the area is displayed below the main screen, showing Paul's location within the city. Pressing 'M' toggles the map, first to show the gang leader's positions, so they can be located and destroyed (the objective of Kersey's self-appointed crusade), and secondly to display replacement weaponry. Both weapons and leaders are found within houses which Paul enters from the streets. In some rooms Kersey can look out of the window onto the street and safely take out baddies at his leisure.

As the slaughter continues, the score reflects the accuracy of the vigilante's shooting. A negative score is achieved only when good guys are being blown away – bystanders or the police for instance. Despatching bad guys results in a healthy positive score, and successfully quelling riots and killing gang leaders results in large bonus scores.



P.S

This isn't nearly as good as I expected. Apart from being morally unsound (shooting down human beings with bazookas and guns can't be that good for public relations), Deathwish **is also badly constructed. I quickly got lost within the very similar streets of New York, and the pointless rotational control method just served to confuse. It's all so illogical, you clear a screen of bad guys and leave, only to return a second later and find them alive again!!! The graphics aren't particularly brilliant either, and once you've seen the gory death sequences a couple of times, the novelty wears off. Not even one for fans of the movie I'm afraid.**



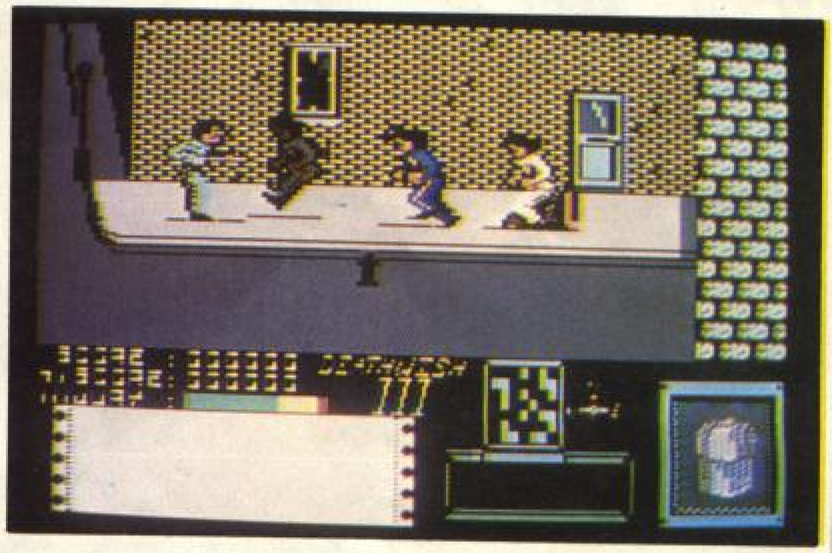
J.R

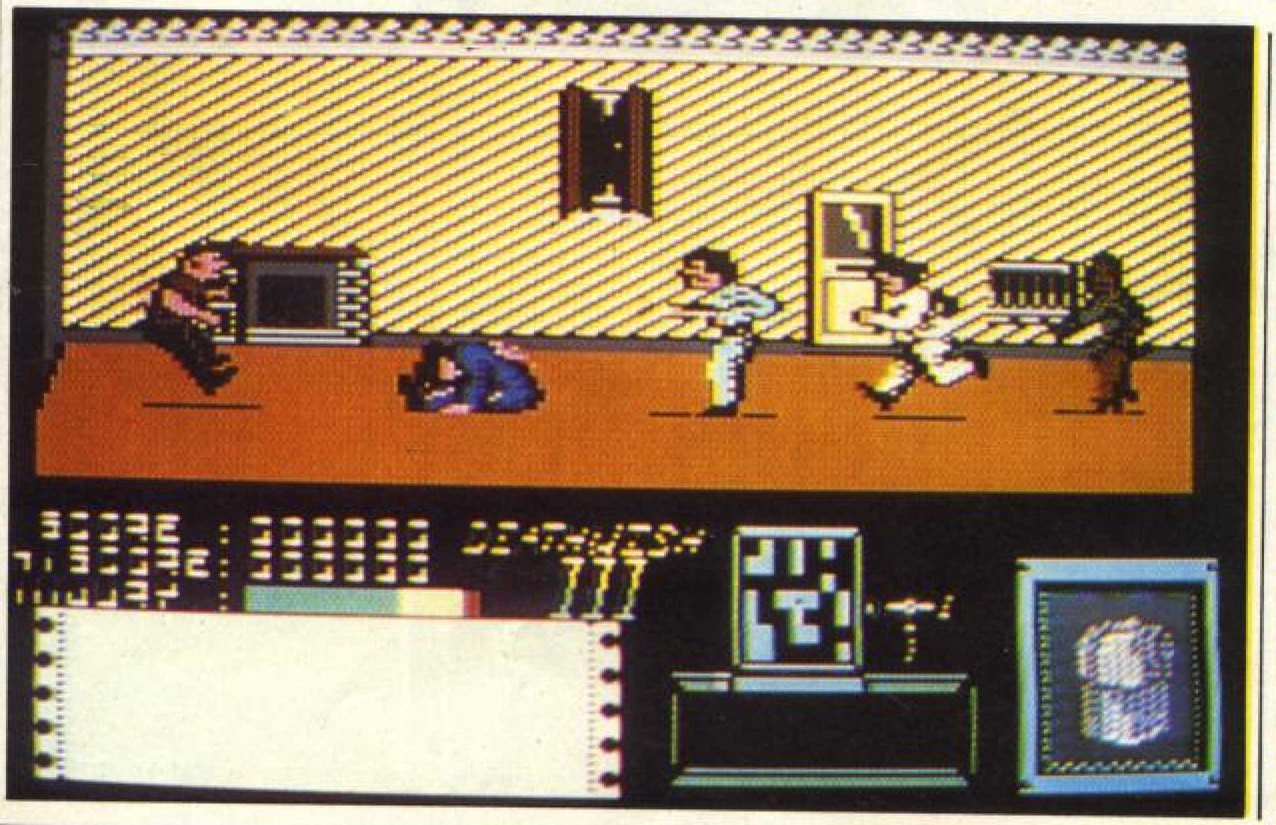
Computer games don't come much gorier than this! The sprites are nicely animated, and the way they're shredded by gunfire and blown apart when bombed is amusing, if not a bit gratuitous. The problem is the flawed gameplay. Weapons and safe rooms are far too easy to find, and you can leave the stony faced sprite alone every so often to replenish his lost energy. My first go went on for ages – and with very little practice it's possible to play for hours on end. The action is still fun though, but the enjoyment is only short term as shooting down people wears off quite quickly. The programmers have obviously made the best they could out of the pretty limited film, but it just hasn't got enough depth or variety.



S.J

Gremlin might well have gone to the Board of Censors with Deathwish III, **as it contains several bloodthirsty death scenes – not least of which is the total blowing away of someone with a rocket launcher . . . gruesome! The method of changing Paul Kersey's situation within the city is somewhat misleading, and an eye must be kept glued to the map or else confusion soon sets in. Unfortunately, it seems that the game lacks a definite conclusion, and as such becomes a matter of stamina rather than skill. This completely undermines the achievements within the game, and results in a rather mindless shoot 'em up. Another uninspired release from a company of considerable talent.**





PRESENTATION 67%
Few options, and a structure that's lacking in variation.

GRAPHICS 69%
Some decent sprites and animated death scenes, unfortunately set against dull backdrops.

SOUND 52%
A jaunty soundtrack which lacks the appropriate air of tension and menace.

HOOKABILITY 73%
Confusing directional control, but otherwise deathly simple.

LASTABILITY 59%
The game could go on for ever – but boredom sets in long before a satisfactory conclusion is reached.

OVERALL 64%
Mirrors the pointlessness of the films a little too well.

ZZAP! TEST

STREET SPORTS BASEBALL

US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

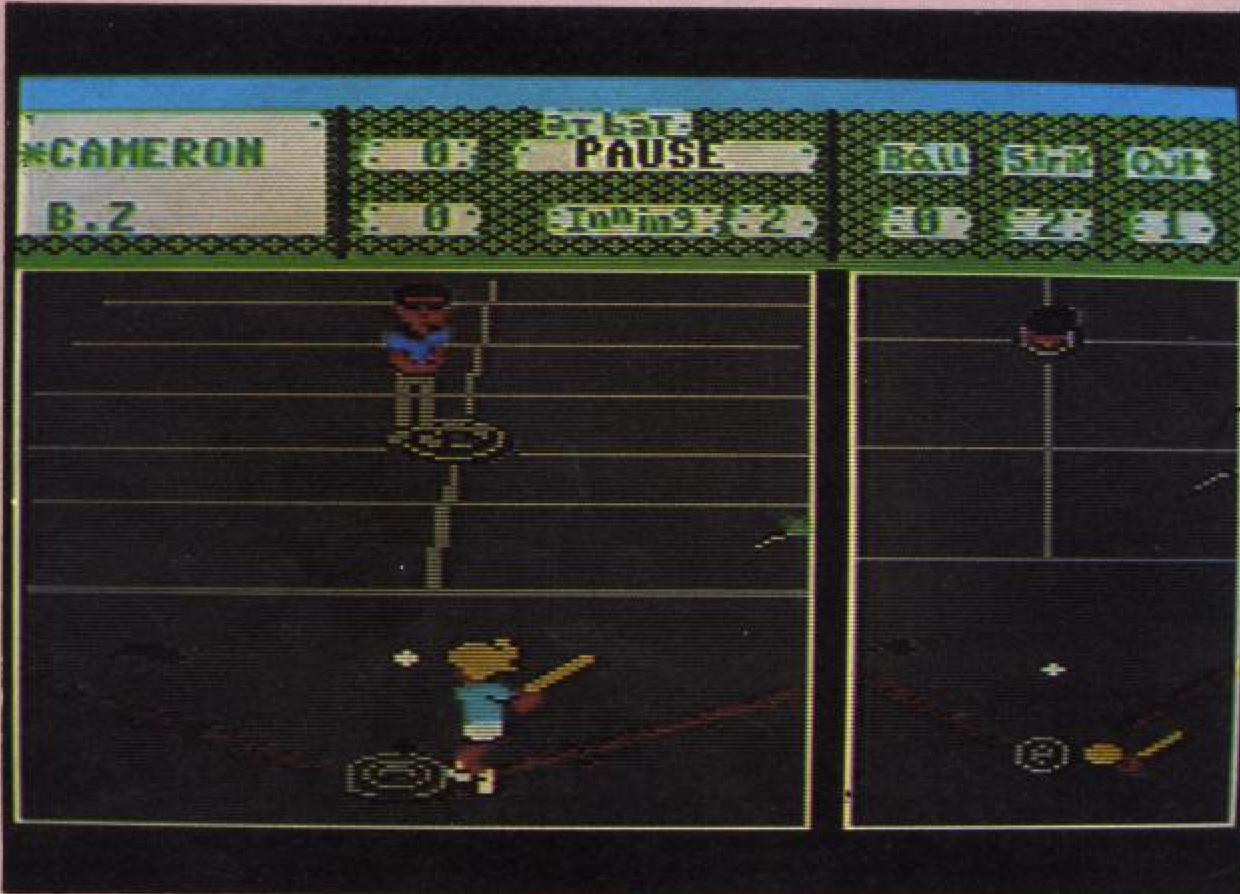
Swap the grass diamond for a parking lot, the homebase for a trash can lid and Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio for Bojo and Kitty from the next block. This is street level Baseball with local kids forming the teams and the two 'ball parks' consisting of a vacant patch of waste ground and a deserted car park.

Having decided on a one or two player game, a coin is tossed to see who gets first choice of player. A group of 16 kids appears loafing around a building frontage, and a cursor is guided from person to person to make the selection. As the cursor falls upon each youngster, a head and shoulders picture is displayed, together with details about their style of play. Having put a full team together, you can adjust the positions and batting order to suit – alternatively, you can go straight into the game. Selected teams can be altered to suit, or saved to disk as required.

Depending on the location you have chosen, the selected diamond appears as a split screen. The main display shows a close up of the current action, and to the left an overhead scene gives a view of the entire play area.

The visiting team bats first, with the overhead view showing a close up of the pitcher and hitter. The pitcher throws the ball by pressing fire, and has control over the ball's flight until it passes the plate, being able to swerve it left or right, and alter the speed of flight. Batting is merely a matter of pressing the fire button at the correct moment so that the bat makes contact with the ball.

When the ball is hit, the main display changes to a view of the corresponding fielder as he or she attempts to catch or stop the ball. The overhead scene shows the relative positions of the ball, fielder and batsman as he runs from base to base.



With two strikes already against him, Cameron's in trouble

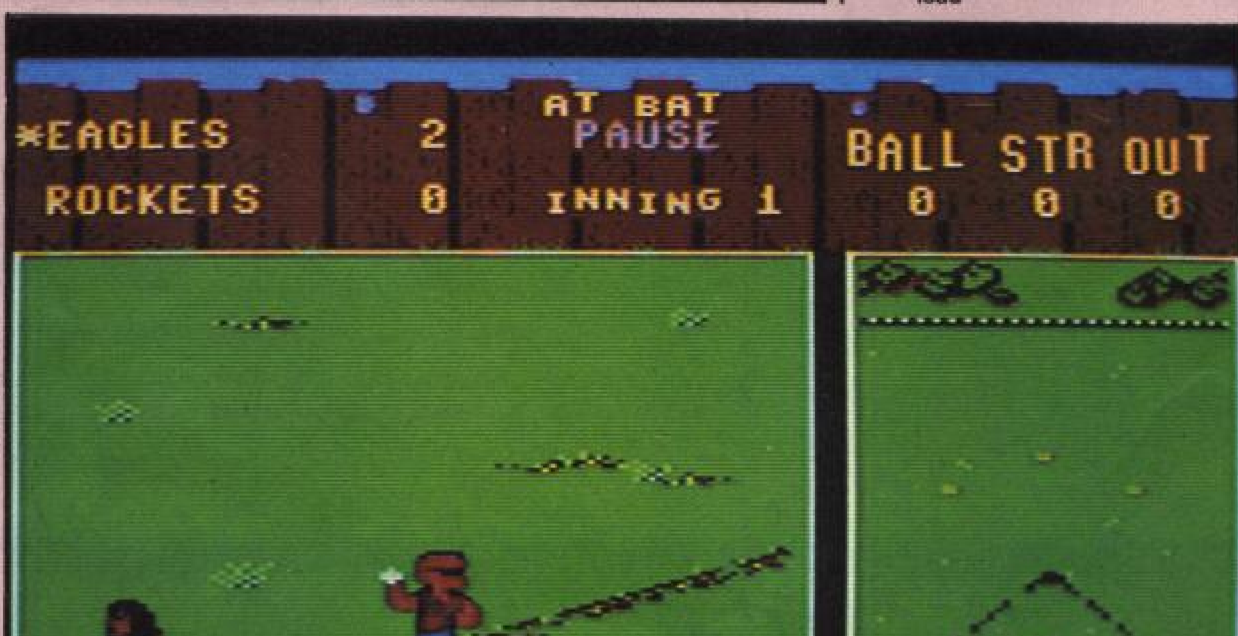


I really like the idea of having a non-professional baseball package, and this game's presentation suits the idea perfectly. It's nice having players that are slower than all the rest, and even those who drop the ball during tense moments! The pitches are also pleasantly tatty – littered with debris and having makeshift bases. Although there's a more than worthy computer adversary, it's in two player mode that the game really comes to life, and I found it enjoyable and lively to play. Obviously, if you don't like baseball then this Epyx offering is in the wrong ballpark completely, otherwise I can thoroughly recommend this as an addition to your sports simulations library.

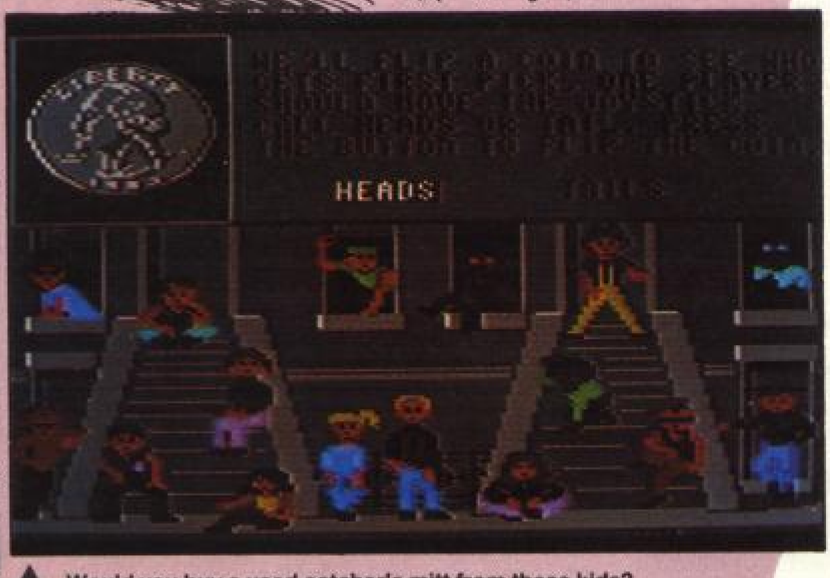


There's a real sense of fun generated from the moment that this program has loaded. The team-picking sections are quite enjoyable, providing a background and team spirit which lasts throughout the game – and the different player's characteristics add a lot of variety to the proceedings. The only real problem is the lack of control in batting mode – the player has no real control over where the ball is going, and vital shots such as punts and ground strokes cannot be executed. I hope that the rest of the Street Sports **range live up to the high standards set by this product, and I look forward to seeing the gang again pretty soon.**

Some clever tactical batting sees the Eagles take an early lead







▲ Would you buy a used catcher's mitt from these kids?

Whenever a score is made, the corresponding information is displayed on a panel above the main screen. This display also includes details about the current batter and innings.

A normal game is made up of nine innings and if the scores are tied at the bottom of the ninth, the game continues by innings until a winner has been decided.



This is definitely one of the best baseball games around, boasting beautiful presentation and a very novel approach. Each player's characteristics *are* visibly different, and it's infuriating when a particularly useless player drops the ball, or throws it very slowly. The trouble is though, when it boils down to it, Street Sports Baseball **is just another in a long line of baseball simulations. The different players' characteristics and strange settings are something new – but otherwise it plays the same as almost every other baseball game on the market.**

PRESENTATION 94%
Generally superb – loads of options, neatly implemented and user friendly.

GRAPHICS 86%
Occasionally lacking in the animation department, but otherwise good.

SOUND 75%
Sparse but suitable spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 75%
The timing of the batting takes a little getting used to but the urge to succeed is great.

LASTABILITY 70%
Should find its greatest lasting appeal in the two player mode.

OVERALL 82%
A fresh approach to an otherwise jaded format.

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DENARIUS

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick only

An exceptionally vile race known as the Rignalian (sic) have strategically positioned their fleet of 16 space arks around our solar system in preparation for colonisation. Desperate for a saviour, mankind has turned to you, captain of the three-strong Denarius fighter fleet.

The action takes place over the 16 vertically scrolling space arks. Denarius flies over each ark, collecting the chlorine pods which cover their exteriors. Kamikaze Rignalian defence craft attack, and must be shot or dodged. Contact with alien craft reduces the Denarius fleet by one, with the new fighter starting at the beginning of the current ark.

In extreme emergencies, Denarius' single shield is activated by pressing the space bar. This only lasts for a few seconds, but during that time the ship remains invincible. Each fighter is equipped with one shield, with extras available along the way.

When Denarius has flown over a space ark, all the chlorine pods collected are turned into bonus points and a sub-game comes into operation.

Gas clouds scroll down the screen, each incorporating a small gap through which Denarius flies to gain bonus points. Denarius moves further and further up the screen until it hits a cloud, whereupon the sub-game ends and the next space ark scrolls into view.

When all 16 space arks have been traversed, the mission starts all over again – this time with doubled defences.



I didn't enjoy playing this average vertically scrolling blaster. Going back to the beginning of a stage after losing a life is annoying and unnecessary, and in the end I only found myself enjoying the sub-game because it's simple and challenging. At two pounds an avid shoot 'em up fan might be able to milk some enjoyment out of it, but avoid it if you're getting bored with playing the same sort of game time and time again.



▶ **As a kamikaze Rignalian whizzes past, the lone Denarius fighter battles on**



Just when you though the vertically scrolling format had been milked dry, another attempt is made to squeeze a little more life from the genre. Denarius **is polished, but it lacks two vital elements – excitement and novelty. The lack of variety in the alien attack patterns is a detraction, and being put back to the beginning of an ark each time you die is extremely annoying. The bonus game compensates a little, but in the end the action becomes repetitive. It's a shame there isn't more depth of gameplay to support the polished graphics and sound – as it stands,** Denarius **only contains enough to give short-term satisfaction to even the most ardent shoot 'em up fan.**

PRESENTATION 78%
Decent title screen and credits, but no options.

GRAPHICS 79%
Colourful and effective bas-relief backdrops and sprites.

SOUND 78%
Stirring title tune and reasonable sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 63%
Straightforward enough, although returning to the start of each stage every time you die is annoying.

LASTABILITY 48%
Enjoyable, but the repetitive action and levels eventually lead to boredom.

OVERALL 57%
A colourful and noisy shoot 'em up which lacks substance.

SNAPDRAGON

Bubble Bus, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick only

Ancient Chinese proverbs say that to win the ultimate accolade of 'Master of the Snap Dragon' a novice must enter the nine-level Dragon Temple, and do battle with the increasingly proficient Dragon Warriors who dwell within.

Your character begins his mission as a red belt Karate expert, equally adept with his fists, feet and the bamboo pole. As he progresses through the levels, his grading increases from red belt through to fifth dan black. A level is completed when all of its warriors have been destroyed.

There are 16 available moves, accessed via a combination of joystick and fire button. These include sweeping kicks, somersaults and bamboo combat.

A display panel at the screen's bottom contains four bars, representing the damage incurred to the warrior's body, head, arms and legs. These diminish as the fighter sustains hits, with a life lost when one falls to zero – the bars replenish themselves naturally if the hero remains unscathed. An initial complement of nine lives is increased by an extra nine for each level completed.

An unusual feature is that if the joystick is left during play, the computer takes over and the character continues the quest on his own. Should the player wish to step in and take over, a simple press of the fire button regains full control.



It must have taken a lot of audacity to release Snapdragon **– especially at this price. The control method is horrendous, and there's a distinct lack of interaction between you and your on-screen counterpart. You can actually complete the game quite easily by finding one move which defeats your opponents time after time.** Snapdragon **is badly designed and utterly unrewarding.**



This is one of the most unchallenging games of all time. All you have to do to beat every opponent is hold the joystick to the bottom left and press the fire button! It says on the cassette inlay 'the Dragon Warriors are clever and soon learn your favourite move' – but they don't, you can beat them time and time again with the same move. Even more annoying is that after enduring the tedious action long enough to conquer the final level, I was most surprised to see my man being put back to the beginning of level nine! As for the nine pound price tag – would you pay that for something you're only likely to play once?

▶ **Nine levels and many Dragon Warriors stand between you and the ultimate accolade of Master of the Snapdragon**



PRESENTATION 73%
One and two player mode, pause, restart and pleasant on-screen layout.

GRAPHICS 57%
Simple backdrops with average sprites and animation.

SOUND 34%
Irritatingly monotonous oriental jingles.

HOOKABILITY 28%
A sluggish and unnecessarily complex control method dictates what little action ensues.

LASTABILITY 9%
Find the one move which destroys all opponents and the game is effectively over.

OVERALL 14%
A poorly designed and totally unchallenging beat 'em up.


GAME OVER
DINAMIC
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L.ROYO
When you decide to embark on this adventure you will face KAIKAS (mutating kangaroos), ORCOS (fierce monsters of the planet DEDRON), LEISER-FREISERS (autonomous search androids, equipped with telescopic cameras and turbo-laser cannon), GARKLAS CLONICOS (specialists in following trails through the swamp jungle) . . . a world full of dangers.
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THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS

Domark, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

Daring and dashing, James Bond is back on the silver screen in the latest 007 epic, *The Living Daylights*. He's also on your monitor screens in Domark's officially licensed game of the film. Here, the player takes the role of the man with the licence to kill, battling his way through eight levels to defeat evil international arms dealer Brad Whittaker.

Each level is based on a scene from the film and consists of a horizontally scrolling backdrop. Bond runs along this from left to right, jumping or ducking obstacles. Every so often an enemy sniper appears from behind a part of the scenery. Bond has to shoot him before he opens fire by aiming a cursor (representing Bond's Walther PPK gun sight) and pressing the fire button. If the enemy opens fire Bond loses energy, represented by a shrinking bar. A completely diminished bar has fatal results, and one of Bond's five lives is lost

At the beginning of each level (apart from the first, where a paint gun is automatically chosen) Bond is taken to Q's and asked to choose one weapon from the four provided – only one is of real help, so choose carefully. Bond reverts to his trusty Walther PPK if the wrong object is chosen.

The hunt for Whittaker begins in Gibraltar, where Bond is involved in an SAS training session (hence the paint guns). SAS men appear in the background, occasionally popping up over the bushes while Bond runs along to the end of the landscape.

Levels Two and Three take 007 behind the Iron Curtain. The first location is Lenin People's Music Conservatory where Bond is helping a Russian defector. Successfully negotiating this section leads to the Trans-Siberian Pipeline. This escape route presents Bond with an assault course of pipes at different heights, all of which he has to avoid to progress to the fourth level.

Back in Britain, one of Whittaker's henchmen has infiltrated the the safe house where Koskov is being debriefed. He's armed with exploding milk bottles and doesn't hesitate to lob them Bond's way as he battles through the building.

After that comes a trip through a fairground. This time explosive balloons float threateningly toward Bond. Tangiers is the next port of call, and Bond leaps from rooftop to rooftop before reaching the penultimate level – a Russian airbase deep within occupied Afghanistan.

With more henchmen disposed of, Bond enters the final level – Whittaker's house, where a final confrontation between Bond and Whittaker takes place . . . If Bond destroys him, he earns the thanks of the Prime Minister.



This game suffers from a severe lack of imagination. It is quite a disappointment, because all it really consists of is a dull eight level horizontally scrolling Missile Command **variant. Each level sticks closely to the film plot, but they all play exactly the same – run along, shoot the men, jump over an obstacle and shoot more men. Unsurprisingly, this does not tend to raise the pulse rate. The music sounds exactly the same as any other Dave Whittaker tune, and the sound effects are just as bland. I'm sure somebody might find some fun playing** The Living Daylights, **but I got bored of playing** Missile Command **years ago.**

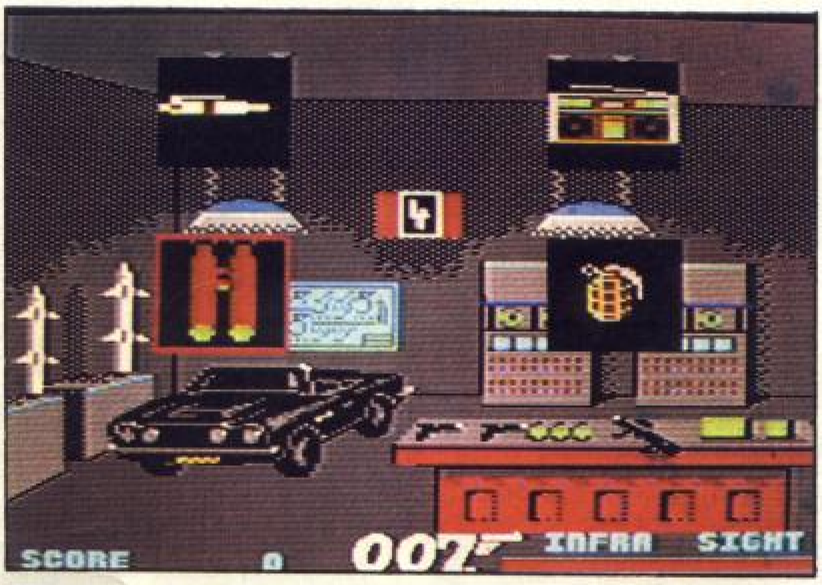


Bond films have always been family occasions, with people queueing down the streets to get into the local cinema. Having looked at Domark's latest tie-in, it looks as though it'll be some time before such things happen at the local computer shop. The game's plot follows the film very loosely, and requires a lot of imagination if you are to relate with the characters. The film's main features are also lacking in the computer version – where's the Aston Martin, or Maryam d'Abo and her equally attractive co-stars? The action is very much in the Missile Command **vein, but with different backgrounds in each stage to attempt to add variation to what's otherwise repetitive and boring. Whichever way you look at this, there's very little here for either the filmgoer or the optimistic games player.**



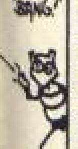
I haven't seen the film yet, and therefore can't really comment on how strong a connection there is between it and the game. As far as it goes though, there are some parts that seem very unrealistic, such as the fact that Bond's Walther PPK has unlimited firepower, he can suffer an enormous amount of gunshot wounds before he eventually dies, and he even has five lives! It does seem a pity that there's so little variation between levels (short of graphical differences), and the game soon becomes a recurring case of déja vu.

▼ With a choice of only four weapons, it looks like the Aston Martin cabriolet has to stay in the garage



▼ All the fun of the fair, as 007 earns his licence to win coconuts





PRESENTATION 67%
Instantly forgettable title screen and no options.

GRAPHICS 79%
Eight impressive scrolling backdrops, let down by blocky sprites.

SOUND 49%
Unremarkable ditty with no relation to the Bond theme, complemented by barely average spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Straightforward action, marred slightly by a badly considered control method.

LASTABILITY 43%
The unchanging action doesn't hold the attention for long.

OVERALL 57%
An uninspired and slightly repetitive *Missile Command* variant. Not what you'd expect from an officially licensed James Bond game.

THUNDERBOLT

Code Masters, £1.99 cass, joystick only

The warring factions of Earth and Proxima are caught in a deadlock, with neither side having the ability to gain the upper hand. However, after many years of intense research, both races simultaneously discover a weapon of terrifying potential . . . the Chronoclasm Bomb.

The warring factions agree never to use the device, and a fragile peace ensues until the year 2555, when out of the blue a 'C' bomb is exploded by an unknown force. The resulting explosion rips a hole in the space-time continuum, leaving a swathe of destruction covering five centuries either side of the detonation point.

War machines from each of the affected eras engage in a massive battle, and as a pilot of one of Earth's Thunderbolt bi-fighters, it's your task to destroy these anachronistic airborne interlopers.

Flying low over the landscape, you avoid ground features such as buildings, rocks and defence barriers. Contact reduces the plane's fuel reserve, represented as a diminishing bar. A complete loss



Unfortunately, there's no commandment that says 'thou shalt not steal someone else's ideas' – if there were, Gavin Raeburn, author of this latest Code Masters offering, would be in trouble. His previous efforts were the highly derivative budget games Terminator **and** The Equalizer **– and** Thunderbolt **only continues this trend. Take** Uridium, **give it different backdrops, change the sprites, knock the playability down a couple of marks and you've got** Thunderbolt. **It's not necessarily bad, but we've seen it all before.**



The objective of Thunderbolt **is to take control of a craft, fly over a two-way horizontally scrolling landscape and shoot down strange alien craft until prompted to land. If you're thinking 'that sounds a bit like** Uridium**', you'd be right – because** Thunderbolt **is a shameless clone of the Braybrook classic. The graphics and sound are different, but the basic gameplay is identical in every respect! Moreover, not content with swiping the plot and basic gameplay, the programmer has also copied some of the attack patterns from** Sanxion **and sprites from** Delta! **As a game in its own right,** Thunderbolt **is slick, polished and playable – but it's only worth considering if you haven't already got** Uridium.



► Chronological conflicts abound in Thunderbolt



Thunderbolt **is remarkably similar to** Uridium. **The graphics are reasonable and the sound is good, but the familiarity of the gameplay and concept make the whole thing rather tedious. Shop around if you're after a really good shoot 'em up – you may not find one that looks better than this, but most will have more content.**

MYSTERY OF THE NILE

Firebird, £7.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick with keys

Deep in the Arabian desert, the evil Bedouin Abu-Sahl has stolen the priceless Jewel of Luxor and plots to sell it to the equally despicable South American collector Baron von Bloefeldt.

Loyal Egyptian, Al-Hasaan, got wind of Abu-Sahl's plans and, determined that the Jewel should stay in its rightful place, has contacted the American adventurer-archaeologist, Nevada Smith and his student assistant Janet Dwight.

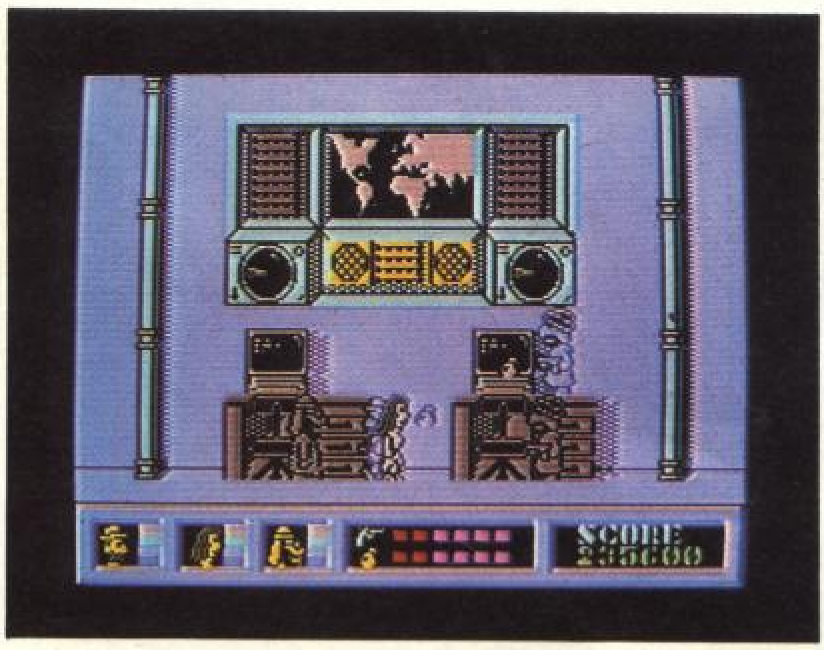
Smith has managed to pinpoint Abu-Sahl's headquarters to the military base at Jarga, and it is to here that the intrepid threesome must venture in order to foil the plans of Sahl and retrieve the Jewel of Luxor.

The action commences in the bustling market place with Janet negotiating the teeming stalls and buildings of downtown Luxor. Having cleared the initial screens, Miss Dwight eventually meets up with her colleagues. Each character is controlled independently by selecting the required person from one of three numbered keys. The characters change position so that the one under control takes the lead, and can use his or her specific weapon (Janet's gre-



Mystery of the Nile **is neither engrossing or addictive, but there's fun to be gleaned from it, mainly due to the stupid scenario and awful graphics. The sprites look like cardboard cutouts (with appropriate animation), and the backdrops look like something you'd get off the back of a Shredded Wheat packet. I can't understand why this isn't on the Silver range – it certainly lacks the reward and enjoyment of some of Firebird's budget titles, which are available at a quarter of the price.**

► No, it's not a Radio One roadshow, it's the high-tech headquarters of the evil Abu-Sahl





Having loaded Mystery of the Nile **and laughed heartily for several minutes, I finally got down and began to play the game. Infantile graphics apart,** Mystery of the Nile **is actually quite playable. I particularly like the way that the characters all shuffle round to let the controllee take the lead, and then leap out of the way whenever a shot is fired by that character. It's a rather humourous game and should be played with tongue firmly in cheek. At £8, you could certainly do with a sense of humour.**

of fuel results in the Thunderbolt nose-diving into the ground below, and thus the end of the mission.

The shift in the time barrier is dangerously unstable, making landing necessary when the chronologically disrupted landscape begins to fluctuate. Successfully landing the craft on the nearest airstrip warps your ship to the next area of conflict ready to continue the onslaught.

PRESENTATION 65%
No options and only a basic high-score table and title screen.

GRAPHICS 62%
Varying from awfully pretty to pretty awful.

SOUND 68%
Neat effects and an average title tune.

HOOKABILITY 64%
The action is straightforward (if a little uninspiring), but the speed takes a lot of getting used to.

LASTABILITY 47%
The levels only vary visually, and consequently the action loses its appeal quite quickly.

OVERALL 52%
A reasonably playable but unoriginal shoot 'em up in the *Uridium* mould.

nades, Smith's revolver and Hasaan's brolly) to defeat the hordes of Abu-Sahl.

As the threesome continue their travels, the screen flicks to the new location where all of Abu-Sahl's men must be killed in order to progress. Every ten screens, a password is given that allows direct access to that particular section on subsequent plays.

PRESENTATION 88%
Humourous scenario and plenty of options, including a password sequence which allows the early screens to be by-passed.

GRAPHICS 40%
Hi-res backdrops and a gaudy colour scheme give a rather Spectrumesque feel.

SOUND 67%
Suitably Middle-Eastern soundtrack but few spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 71%
The simple control method and choice of three characters give immediate appeal.

LASTABILITY 73%
PLenty of Egyptian locations to visit, and the use of passwords simplifies progression.

OVERALL 58%
A comical, but overpriced arcade adventure.

TRANS-ATLANTIC BALLOON CHALLENGE

Virgin, £7.95 cass, joystick or keys

Cast your minds back a couple of months to when Richard Branson dominated the headlines with his interminable attempts to get a balloon across the atlantic. Well, now you have your chance to participate in this exciting and necessary event, by taking the grinning beard's place and attempting to emulate his achievements.

The game takes the form of a two player balloon race between your Virgin balloon and an annonymous challenger. Each player is given control of a flock of three sonic-beam spitting eagles, used to guide and defend their balloon as it makes the perilous journey across the sea. The birds are also used to sabotage the opponent's balloon and reduce his chances of success.

The screen is split horizontally, with the Virgin Balloon at the top. To the left of each display area is a status panel containing three bars, representing Fuel, Altitude and the eagle's Energy Status. Also present is a map showing the balloon's position. On the right hand side are four icons which are activated to move the balloon left and right, increase altitude or switch screens (so that your eagle can visit the opponent's screen).

The eagle loses energy as it flies, causing its bar to shrink. Sitting on top of the balloon replenishes the lost calories and the bar adjusts accordingly. The problem with this is that the bird's weight causes the balloon to lose altitude! The bird dies when its energy drops to zero, and it is then replaced by one of its colleagues.

Throughout the crossing an unfriendly biplane flies in and, if left alone, drops either a pot of paint or puncture device. If ignored, these deadly objects cause the balloon to lose height. Large missiles also cause grief and deflate the balloon completely if they hit their target. Children occasionally sail past, carried through the air by bunches of balloons. These yield extra points if collected, or remove some of the existing score if destroyed.

The game ends when both balloons have burst, all the eagles are dead or one of the players crosses the Atlantic. However, scraping your balloon off the Ulster landscape is not recommended, and dropping the game in the Irish sea only serves to irritate the coastguard – happy record breaking!



The effort that went into generating public interest in this ballooning non-event was admirable, if not totally over the top. Our local radio station covered just about every minute of the journey and every telly news bulletin showed pictures of the floating cheshire cat. Now we've been treated to an infantile and unchallenging computer game! There simply isn't enough in the gameplay to amuse a player for more than an hour – all you have to do is protect your balloon from two types of hazard and occasionally change the controls. It's true to say that the player is kept busy – but the action is just too boring and overpriced to be worthwhile.



Once again that bored businessman hits the headlines – and his game hits the fan. Trans-Atlantic Balloon Challenge **is completely and utterly dire – I cannot pour enough scorn on this pathetically contrived program. The link between the farcical aerial escapades of Mr Branson and this 'game' is tenuous to say the least. Save for the fact that it features a red balloon with 'Virgin' slashed across it, there is no** real **connection with the challenge proper. The addition of 'sonic beam spitting eagles' to spice up the action is the final straw. There is some Trans-Atlantic, a little Balloon, but absolutely no Challenge whatsoever. I bet Mr Branson hasn't seen it.**



As if the event itself hadn't been over-hyped to the point of internal collapse, here's a computer game just to remind you of the 'thrilling' Atlantic crossing. I wouldn't mind if it was a good game, but it isn't. The two player mode is very badly designed, and a game only lasts a minute or two before one player's balloon plummets into the sea. Playing against the computer is even worse – the wally of an opponent is completely unchallenging and is disposed of within a minute. The graphics are poor and only the title music stands out as being good. At eight quid it just doesn't offer good value for money.

► **It's the battle of the sonic beam-spitting Eagles – and not a lesser-spotted Branson in sight**



PRESENTATION 74%
One or two player option and sensible, (if a little unaesthetic) on-screen presentation.

GRAPHICS 38%
Mostly simple and uninspired.

SOUND 79%
A pleasant 'floatalong' Rob Hubbard tune plays on the title screen.

HOOKABILITY 32%
The simplistic action is almost too easy to get to grips with.

LASTABILITY 19%
Shouldn't appeal for more than a couple of goes.

OVERALL 23%
A poor piece of software which offers little to an intelligent games player.

CONVOY RAIDER

Gremlin Graphics, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

Ever fancied being the Captain of a modern warship? If you have, you'll be pleased to know that you can now live out your fantasy with Gremlin Graphics' *Convoy Raider*. As commander of a modern battlecruiser, your mission is to patrol the inner sea, protecting the ship from enemy attacks.

The versatile vessel carries three types of weapon – Exocet ship-to-ship missiles, Airwolf ship-to-air missiles and a depth-charge dropping Helicopter. Each weapon has its own activation system, so only one type can be used at a time.

The main screen consists of three radars, showing the relative positions of enemy ships, aircraft and submarines in your vicinity. Beside each radar disc is an icon which flashes yellow when an enemy attack is imminent, and red when the enemy are attacking, allowing the corresponding weapon to be accessed.

A missile and plane attack look very similar. The player controls a gun at the bottom of the screen and shoots down the flying craft as they come over.

When depth charging, the helicopter and submarine are shown on a representative screen. A marker moves up and down and the fire button drops charges. The depth charges explode at the point where the marker was when they were released.

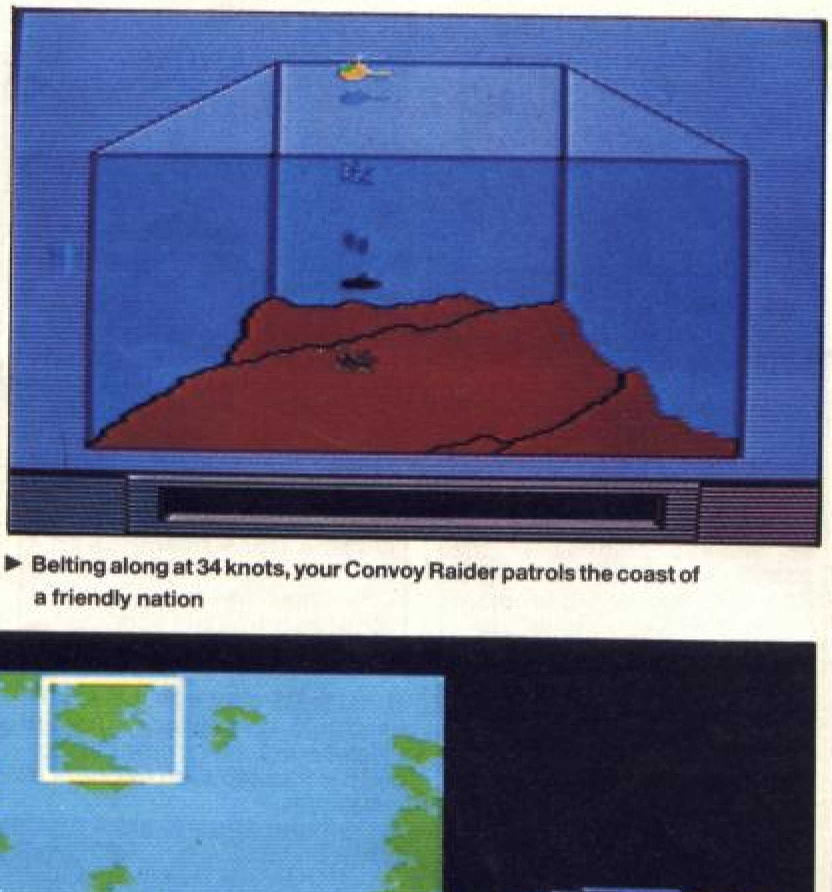
Enemy shipping is destroyed using the video-linked exocet system. The player keeps the missile on course using the joystick, guiding it towards a ship before it runs out of fuel.

The ship is damaged if an attacking craft is not destroyed. As damage is inflicted, a display of the ship on the status screen changes colour from an undamaged black to ruined red. A repair ship sets sail from port when things are looking grim, and has to be found before the ship sinks. Accessing the map screen shows the position of both ships. A notched circle representing the current heading is shown at top right, and can be rotated left or right to change the current heading. When the repair ship is found, the ship is fixed and can continue on its mission.

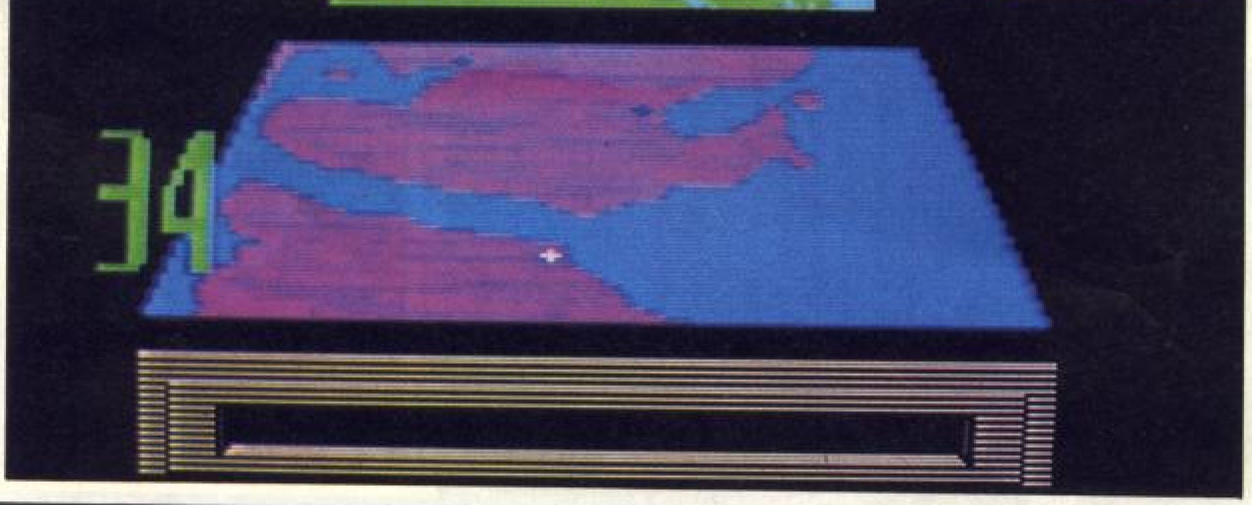


Strategy/arcade games such as Convoy Raider **are something of a new area for Gremlin, and it would seem that they didn't really know where to go with this idea. It's neither strategic enough for wargamers, nor of a sufficient quality to appease an arcade freak. The three main sections are all fairly derivative, especially the anti-aircraft scene which is straight out of** Beach Head **(a game which is now collecting its pension) without even improving on the basic theme. If there were a little more variation within the game and more control over the different sections then it just may have been something special. Unfortunately there isn't, and it isn't.**

▶ **Your depth-charging helicopter plays a pensive game of cat-and-mouse with an enemy sub**



▶ **Belting along at 34 knots, your Convoy Raider patrols the coast of a friendly nation**





Take a couple of slices of Beach Head, **add a sub-standard missile-guiding sequence and a touch of the ancient** Depth Charge **arcade game – then half-bake the whole mixture. Finish it off with some below-average graphics and the barest of sound effects. The result?** Convoy Raider **– a bland mixture of ancient ideas. There simply isn't enough in it. All three sub-games offer very little in the way of action or addiction, and the whole game simply doesn't hang together. If you want some salty action, buy** Destroyer **instead.**



No sooner have Gremlin cheered us up with their stunning new release Re-Bounder, **than they go and bring** Convoy Raider **to bring us back down again. It attempts to be an arcade/strategy game, but in truth it lacks the qualities of both. The three sections are visually bland, and only the 'depth-charging subs' section entertains to any degree. In fact, the anti-aircraft section is almost poorer than the equivalent part in** Beach Head, **which is now almost four years old. I really can't recommend this.**

PRESENTATION 78%
Well laid out, with an easy to use icon system.

GRAPHICS 41%
Occasionally detailed, but in all the wrong places.

SOUND 9%
Sparse and grating white noise effects.

HOOKABILITY 38%
There's no problem starting – it's just that the action lacks reward or excitement.

LASTABILITY 21%
The mixture of old ideas fails to capture the imagination for more than a couple of plays.

OVERALL 28%
An unremarkable attempt at an arcade wargame.


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KIKSTART II

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Rev that throttle, pull a wheelie and burn across the dirt track – *Kikstart* is back with a vengeance. This enhanced version of the classic motorcycling simulation boasts 24 new courses, improved graphics, tweaked gameplay, a couple of new hazards and a course designer.

Either one or two players can tackle a combination of any five courses at one time. The screen is split horizontally, with each motorcyclist viewed side-on. There are five separate timers above each display (one for each course), a total time elapsed meter and a speedometer.

The start of a race is announced by a klaxon, and both cyclists zoom off over the scrolling courses. The bikes accelerate, decelerate, wheelie or jump, depending on the way the joystick is moved.

Hazards litter the courses. Steps and Picnic Tables are jumped over, and Tyres, Hedges and Barrels have to be crossed quickly – however, the opposite is the case for Ramps, Sand Pits, Brick Walls, Screen Walls and Gates. Mud patches slow the bike down and spikes and flame shooters completely wreck it!

If an obstacle is attempted incorrectly, the rider is toppled and the landscape scrolls swiftly to the next convenient position where the rider can be put back on the course. When the screen is scrolling the timer counts twice as fast as a penalty for the mistake.

When you get bored of riding the preset courses, the editor can be accessed from the title screen to create new routes. When a course, or series of courses have been created or modified they can be raced over and saved to tape or disk for later use. Now you can build the most horrifically difficult courses and challenge your friends over them – he he!



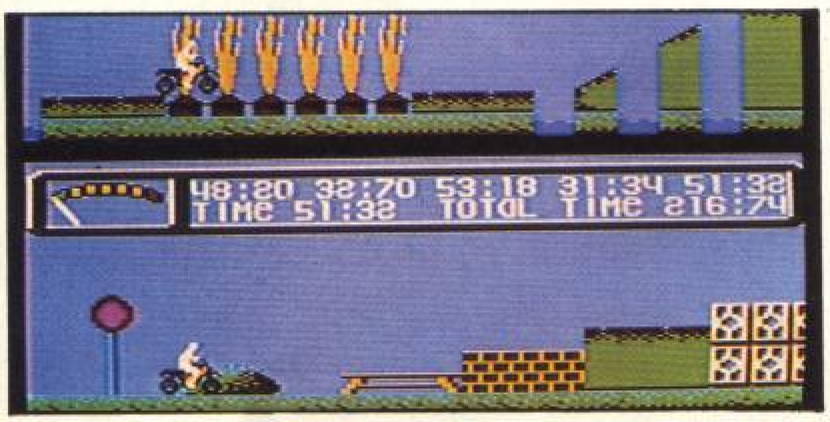
If you've got little patience and are easily annoyed, then Kikstart II **could drive you hopping mad. If you're like me and love the** Kikstart **series you'll love every minute of it. Controlling the bike is frustratingly hard to master, but the game's great addictiveness keeps you playing and playing. When you get bored of the 24 programmed courses, you can design your own with the built-in screen editor. At two quid** Kikstart **combines great value for money, variety, addiction and long-lasting appeal.**



After being none-too impressed with the first Kikstart **(and the subsequent 128 version), I am slightly less disenchanted with this latest offering. To say the graphics have been improved is something of an understatement – they're now very smart indeed and give the game a much-needed shot in the arm. Unfortunately, however, the gameplay remains very similar to the first, and I find it rather frustrating and tiresome to play. The course designer is, without doubt, the real star of the show, and for fans of the original it should more than justify the purchase of this new version. After all, it's what they've been after for the past two years.**



This is it! Exactly what us Kikstart **fans have been waiting for. The graphics are vastly improved, with far, far better motorbikes and backdrops. The addition of a speedometer and slightly tweaked controls make riding the bike slightly easier and more precise – you can now attain the right speeds for negotiating obstacles without the need to guess. The screen editor takes a couple of hours of getting used to, but courses are assembled easily enough once the designer is familiar. The best thing though, is that the editor and game are both loaded at once – there's no clumsy loader involving several loads and reloads.** Kikstart **II is extremely well thought out, offering two player simultaneous action, a brilliant computer opponent and an excellent screen designer for only two pounds. How can you resist?**



▲ Among the many simple obstacles that bar your path, you also have to run the gauntlet of flame throwers that can turn the unwary biker to charcoal

▼ While player one is about to traverse the garden walling blocks, player two struggles over an enormous spring-loaded platform



PRESENTATION 91%
Very polished and user friendly, with one or two player option and a well thought out designer.

GRAPHICS 79%
Much improved over the original, with lovely use of colour.

SOUND 42%
Reasonable sound effects and a bland title ditty.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Initially frustrating, but improving course times is thoroughly enjoyable and maddeningly addictive.

LASTABILITY 90%
Twenty-four courses *and* a screen designer to keep you scrambling for months.

OVERALL 86%
Just what *Kikstart* fans are waiting for – virtually unlimited dirt bike riding.

TEST

STAR PAWS

Software Projects, £5.95 cass, £10.95 disk, joystick only

●John Darnell's finger-licking frolics across the spaceways

Astro-telexes are notoriously unreliable – especially the Series Seven. Because of this, a message to 'Captain Neil Armstrong' actually arrived addressed to 'Captain Rover Pawstrong'. This minor error means that an inexperienced canine space officer has been sent on a mission for which he is totally unsuited – and the future of the free Universe depends upon his success!

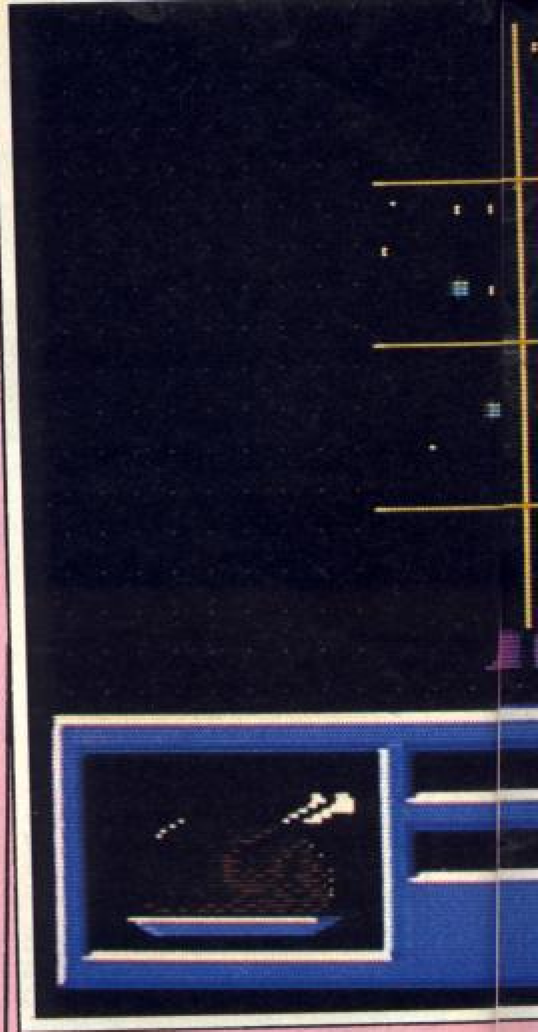
A band of mercenaries have begun breeding the Tasty Space Griffin, a selected delicacy among the Universe's populace and powerful force on the stock exchange. By flooding the market with birds, the mercenaries intend to destabilise the Universe's monetary system and then, with Governments in chaos, they can step in and take control of the Free Worlds.

Strong of heart (but weak of mind), Pawstrong sets forth on his mission, eventually landing upon the small moon of a distant planet where the mercenaries have set up the Griffin farm. Pawstrong's mission is to destroy all 20 Tasty Space Griffins using only his cunning (and one or two thermonuclear devices that are thoughtfully provided along the way).

Pawstrong and the scrolling lunar landscape are displayed in the screen's upper half, while below lies an information panel showing a list of the objects collected and a scanner giving the relative positions of the nearest Space Griffin and our spacesuited hero. Rover's energy is represented by a cooked Griffin, which disappears with time to reveal the bony carcass beneath. When the full skeleton is visible Pawstrong's efforts come to an abrupt end.

The daring doggie can attempt to capture the birds by hand, or can utilise a variety of equipment. This is dropped from a supply ship which constantly whizzes around the moon. When Rover comes across one of these crates, it's automatically unpacked and the equipment is added to his store. The name of the item found is revealed in the slot below the main screen. There are nine different items to be collected ranging from extra weaponry and transport to food and a bonus puzzle which, if correctly rearranged within a time limit, awards the player with a bonus score.

Below the surface of the moon,





Deep below the ground, Rover must choose between a lamp or a griffin





The humourous slant in Star Paws makes quite a change from the usual 'life and death' scenarios. It's quite an appealing game; easy on the eye and gentle on the brain. The gameplay is deceptively simple – what appears at first sight to be a rather dull chase game eventually ends up being extremely captivating, and addictive enough to warrant long-term attention. The challenge is also consistent: no matter how many birds you've despatched, the next capture is just as pleasing as the last. Complete with lovely graphics and some really smart parallax scrolling, I'm sure Star Paws will appeal to many people – and its mid-range price makes it a real bargain.





▲ Pawstrong receives another special delivery – courtesy of his personal flying saucer service

lies a hidden mine with six levels of passages which are also inhabited by Griffins. A hidden map shows the levels and connecting elevators, and a mining lamp allows Pawstrong to make light of the situation. It's also within this mine that ammunition for Pawstrong's laser gun is found.

Collecting and activating the matter transporter allows Rover to be teleported to his laser gun which lies on another part of the moon. Here he bombards Griffins from the catapult-style weapon – once he has found their range. However, the crafty Griffins occasionally produce a trampoline, sending Rover's missiles back the way they came . . . with devestating results.

Whenever any of the birds are destroyed the supply saucer comes spinning down and collects the corpse, presumably to take them back to headquarters – they are delicious after all!



It's really nice to see something as refreshingly playable as Star Paws come into the office. I don't what it is that sets it apart, the graphics and sound are competent but that's not the point, there's some indefinable quality about the gameplay that keeps you coming back for more. Like I said, I don't know what it is – if I did I'd be raking in the dough designing games for software houses. Star Paws is just great, and however simplistic that may sound it's still the truth so tough luck. The greatest recommendation I can afford to this game is that it's one of the few games we played because we wanted to and not because we had to.



As the first of Software Projects' new mid-price range, Star Paws is going to have a lot to prove – luckily, it's got a hell of a lot going for it. It's original, pretty, funny, addictive and great value for money. Although at first it seems that it's going to be easily completed, the going is deceptively tough and requires constant attention. The graphics are not as polished as they might have been, and the occasional bug appears during play, but otherwise this has been one of the most enjoyable games in the office for quite some time. I suppose that Star Paws' main appeal is that it has no pretensions, it's simply a playable and enjoyable game.

▼ Precariously balanced on his high-powered rocket, Pawstrong goes in search of dinner



PRESENTATION 91%
A novel loading screen, cinematic scenario, rolling demo and 'paws' mode.

GRAPHICS 92%
The impressive title screen is a good taster for the outstanding scrolling, backdrops and animation.

SOUND 79%
A racy Hubbard soundtrack plays continuously – pity about the lack of effects though.

HOOKABILITY 78%
Accessing the equipment tends to be difficult and the control of Pawstrong proves a little fiddly at first.

LASTABILITY 94%
There's four entertaining sub-games, and catching all 20 birds presents an absorbing challenge.

OVERALL 90%
A humourous and unusual release from Software Projects.



GAME OVER

Imagine, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Arkos, Lieutenant of Queen Gremla's all-powerful army, has become disillusioned with his monarch's growing greed and cruelty, and has vowed to overthrow her.

Commencing in the deepest depths of the Planet Prison, Arkos' objective is to run and jump from left to right across 20 hazard-filled flick screens. Lifts take him to higher levels, and sometimes provide moving stepping stones to the next part of the landscape. Arkos can fall off a lift as long as there is solid ground to break his fall – but tumbling into void results in a loss of one of his three lives.

The dungeons are far from empty, and within seconds of the mission starting the air is filled with flying Guardian Robots which fire at the renegade soldier. Each hit sustained results in a loss of energy, displayed at the bottom of the screen as a diminishing bar.

For protection, the warrior carries 20 hand grenades and a blaster with unlimited rounds. Pressing the fire button rapidly activates the laser gun – keeping the button depressed launches an all-destroying grenade.

As he progresses through the environment, Arkos encounters red and white barrels. When these are destroyed (by three laser blasts), they reveal a mystery feature which is picked up when touched. These features include extra Grenades, an energy replenishing Heart, a 'Pow Up' sign which increases his fire power and a protective Force Field offering limited protection from enemy fire. Occasionally a mine appears, blowing up the hero if accidently collected.

After the prison chambers comes a slimy swamp, where fat green monsters (not unlike Liddon in stature), emerge aggressively from the ground. If this marshy land is negotiated and screen 11 reached, a huge mud-gobbing monster appears and blocks the route. Shooting this disgusting fatty 40 times rids it from the face of the planet, but quick action has to be taken before it's rapidly-spat death phlegm depletes the hero's energy.



▲ Two Guardian robots close in for the kill. Could this be Game Over for Lieutenant Arkos?

More marshy land is endured before the 19th screen is reached. Here, three Giant Robots appear and have to be shot 20 times before they're turned to scrap.

After the clash with the robots comes a testing trip through the forest land to Gremla's Palace. Here, blaster and grenades are exchanged for a 25 round laser cannon, Arkos takes on fireball shooting Leiser-Freisers and jumping Kaikas before reaching the Giant Guardian. This monster soaks up 75 well-aimed shots before leaving his post. With that destroyed, Arkos is free to complete his assassination mission.



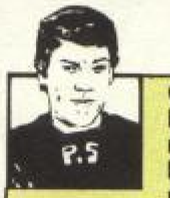
▲ Arkos scurries across the screen just as an attack craft tries to strafe our hero



If you cast your minds back to the previous Imagine/Dinamic release, Army Moves**, you'll remember that it was considered to be very good, but a touch too difficult. Well, here we go again . . .** Game Over **is extremely nice to look at and great to listen to (there's a splendid Galway soundtrack) – but it's an absolute swine to play. There's plenty of action, but death is a frequent visitor and once again you have to go *all* the way back to the start of each level when you're killed – something that I find annoying in any game.** Game Over **is challenging, but far too frustrating to be considered an essential purchase.**



While playing Game Over**, I suddenly twigged that it's very similar to Hewson's** Exolon**. Both feature a character who has to battle over a series of flick screens to a set goal. However, in this game the character is extremely sluggish to respond to the joystick and has an awkward jumping action – making jumping from platform to platform very tricky. Even worse is a bug where the armoured fellow falls through the floor in certain situations. Even though these annoyances are almost unbearable, the action remains addictive, fired by the urge to progress. The title music deserves a mention, but otherwise there's nothing outstanding to warrant the price. Take it or leave it.**



Once again you boldly go where no man has gone before, to kill, maim, and generally make a nuisance of yourself. Game Over **isn't startlingly novel, but does have a certain addictiveness that keeps you playing, for a while at least. The control method is sluggish, and the main character not only looks like a deep sea diver, but moves like one as well. Consequently the game is difficult and frustrating – but the action remains strangely addictive. The title music is superb, but the in-game effects are very bland indeed. There are plenty of this type of game around – so take your time choosing.**

PRESENTATION 78%
Competent throughout, with well documented instructions.

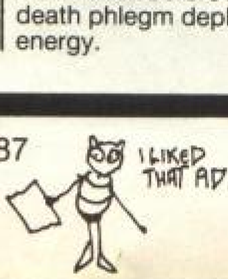
GRAPHICS 71%
Blocky sprites, but reasonable backdrops.

SOUND 92%
Great title tune (complete with sampled effects) – the in-game effects are rather poor though.

HOOKABILITY 63%
The control method is very confusing – but the game's addictive nonetheless.

LASTABILITY 66%
Plenty of action if you're prepared to stick with it.

OVERALL 68%
A challenging, if rather frustrating shooting/exploring game.





MORE FUN THAN A BARREL FULL OF MONKEYS
JACK THE NIPPER... II
IN COCONUT CAPERS
Help! Stop! The country has had enough, no more can it take of the devilish pranks and obnoxious behaviour of darling little Jack. Off to a land where many of your kind were banished long before. Off to Australia Jack you must go!!!
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Jack the Nipper Banished
Britains most notorious nipper is deported to Australia
"I don't like your stinking climate anyway you *cough!* splutter...igs. There's plenty of places just waiting for me. Ha!!" bluffed Jack defiantly.
On the ground, in the air, you can't keep a mischief maker out of trouble and with all those pretty air hostesses around ... well what do you expect.
GERONIMO
Its no fun being cooped up. Maybe there's something down there that fancies being mugged ... bitten ... spat at or pinched. As ever poor Mam and Dad dutifully follow their nauseating little offspring.
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ZZAP! BACK

It's time to delve back into the depths of history – one and a half years ago to be precise. The items under scrutiny are ZZAP! issues 11 and 12 the March and April issues of 1986. Julian Rignall and Steve Jarratt take a look at the games reviewed and decide how the software in question would hold its own today.

GAMES ZZAPBACKED

ARC OF YESOD
MERCENARY
HARDBALL
URIDIUM
ZOIDS

ARC OF YESOD
Odin

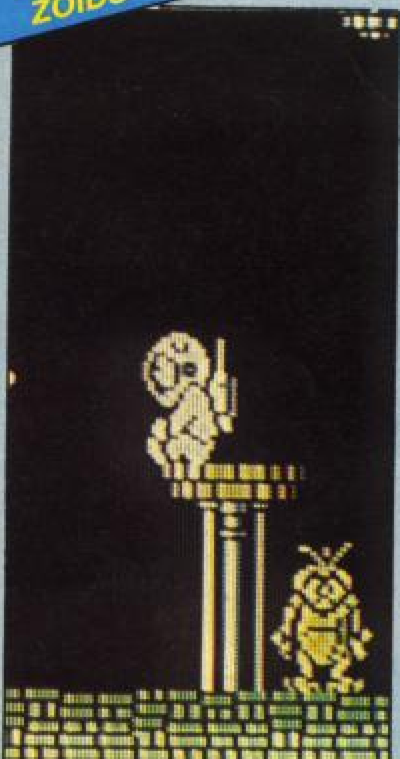
Controversy erupted over this sequel to *Nodes of Yesod*. Gary Penn thought Charlie Fotheringham Grunes' second lunar adventure to be a little too similar to his first. 'I didn't enjoy the experience quite so much the second time around' he complained. Julian and Gary Liddon were perfectly happy though, and argued until sizzler status was awarded. 'A truly great game' commented Mr Liddon, while Mr Rignall described it as 'an excellent arcade adventure'.

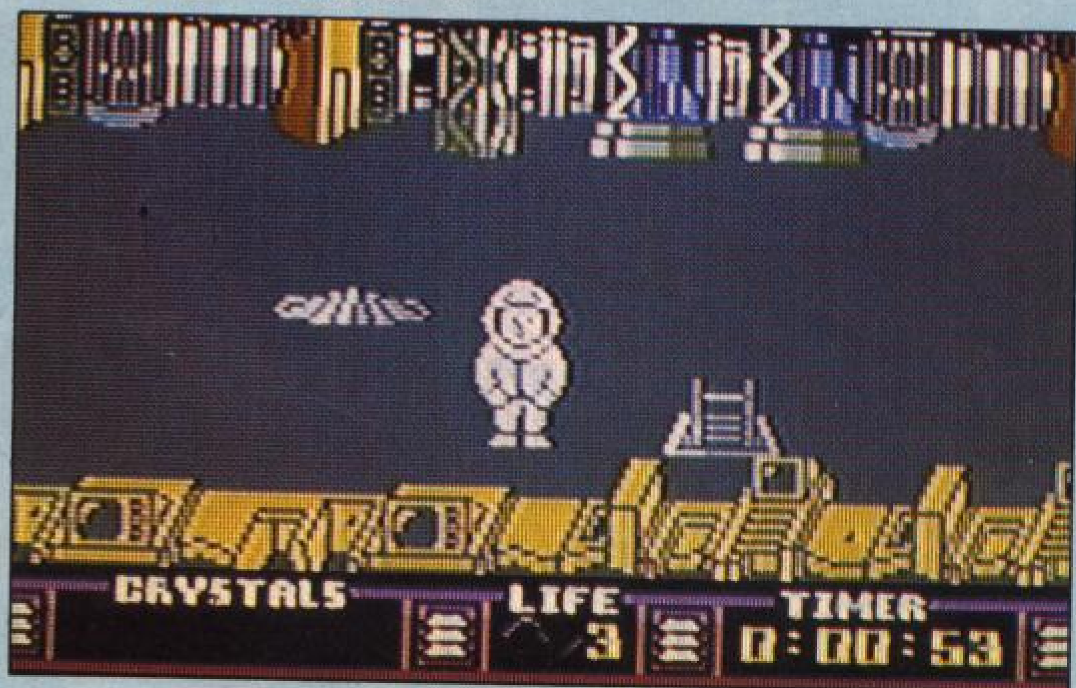
Arc of Yesod plays very similarly to Nodes, but its great graphics and interesting features make it different enough to be exciting. There are plenty of better arcade adventures around these days, but Arc of Yesod still provides a bit of fun.
JR

I only ever played *Arc of Yesod*, so I can't really comment on the similarity between it and *Nodes* – but it's a great game in its own right.
SJ

(Jaz) It was rated just right at the time. Nowadays though, all the ratings except Presentation and Sound should go down by about 10%.

(Steve) I'll second that opinion.





Presentation 82%
A few options and attractive on screen layout

Graphics 96%
Eloquent backdrops, full of detail and atmosphere with equally attractive sprites

Sound 83%
Some good tunes and befitting FX

Hookability 92%
Although the game is a mite derivative it still proves compelling to both play and map

Lastability 91%
A harder game to complete but just as absorbing

Value For Money 90%
Maybe not so worthy if you've already bought Nodes … But then if you liked it or haven't got the original, Arc offers a bit more for a little less.

Overall 91%
An improved version of Nodes can only be an example of an excellent arcade adventure

ZOIDS
Martech

The only game to reach sizzler status during April 1986 was Martech's officially licensed game of the plastic *Zoids* toys. The action was far from kiddie though, and the team spent many hours puzzling over the *Zoid*'s operation. Julian's observation that '*Zoids* is a game which will keep you occupied for months' seemed to hold quite true. Paul was impressed with the game's depth, describing it as 'one of the best arcade/strategy games I've seen', and Gary Penn followed suit saying that '*Zoids* is amazing'.

The trouble with Zoids is that it's incredibly difficult to get in to. Perseverence pays off though, and once you get into the action there's a whole new environment to explore and learn – the depth and complexity is incredible.
JR

I slaved long and hard over *Zoids* – and got absolutely nowhere. Although being graphically impressive and very atmospheric (generated by the incredible Hubbard soundtrack), the game was severely lacking in playability and was far too difficult.
SJ

(Jaz) Apart from the excessive Hookability mark (the game is very difficult to get into), I think that the ratings remain accurate.

(Steve) Presentation, Hookability and Lastability down to mid-eighties. Sound up slightly and overall 88% – not sizzler material these days.



Presentation 98%
Very comprehensive instructions and brilliant on-screen presentation

Graphics 87%
Excellent windowing system, well thought out icons, but the central map screen scrolls wobbily

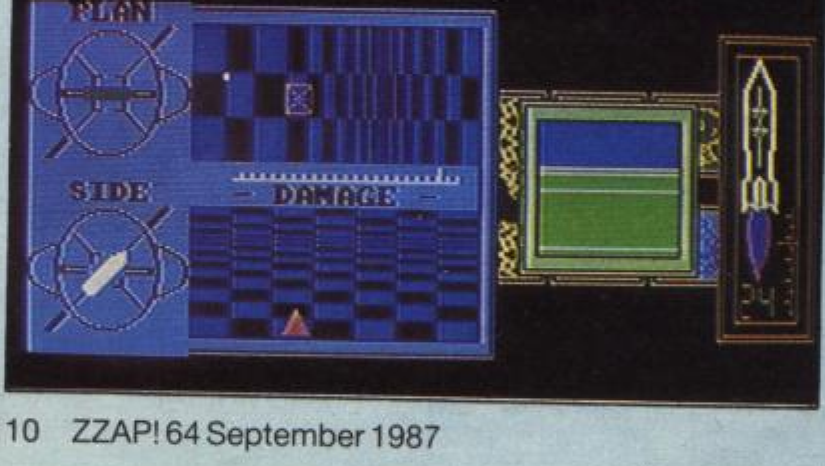
Sound 91%
An atmospheric Rob Hubbard piece which suits the game perfectly

Hookability 90%
Because it's so tough it's very tough to get anywhere without a lot of practice

Lastability 98%
Once you get going though, the Zoid conquest becomes highly involved

Value For Money 96%
Merging with a Zoid works out cheaper than buying a plastic one

Overall 96%
A very challenging and excellent arcade adventure/strategy/shoot em up





Presentation 95%
Well thought out options and excellently controlled joystick control.

Graphics 96%
Stunning graphics, especially the animation on the giant size players.

Sound 68%
Roar of crowd and a few jolly jingles.

Hookability 91%
Ease of use allows the player to instantly become a baseball star.

Lastability 92%
A tough nut computer opponent and two player option means that Hardball will be played long after the baseball season is over.

Value For Money 93%
The second best thing to the World Series.

Overall 93%
A truly realistic sports simulation which sets new standards.

HARDBALL
US Gold

Although by no means the first baseball game, *Hardball* proved popular due to its impressive animated figures. Many hours of work were lost as the team challenged one another and the computer to a nine innings game. '*Hardball* sets new standards in gameplay, depth and animation' ejaculated Rignall, and Penn was happy to admit that it was 'one of my favourite sports simulations.' *Hardball* was also a firm favourite with Paul Sumner, who thought it 'the most impressive baseball simulation yet seen.'

Hardball has some of the biggest and most realistically animated sprites ever seen. The only trouble is that it's difficult to play and consequently very frustrating. Still, practice makes perfect.
JR

Impressive animation and realistic gameplay helped to create a great atmosphere. Difficult to get to grips with but rewarding once mastered – acclaimed at the time and deservedly so.
SJ

(Jaz) Graphics down to the low nineties, and Hookability, Lastability, Value and Overall down to the low eighties. I don't think it would make a sizzler today – especially with the highly playable *Street Sports Baseball* as competition.

(Steve) The Graphics were good but lacked variety – down five percent or so. Lastability, Hookability and Overall should come down by ten percent – it's a good simulation, but ultimately repetitive.

URIDIUM
Hewson

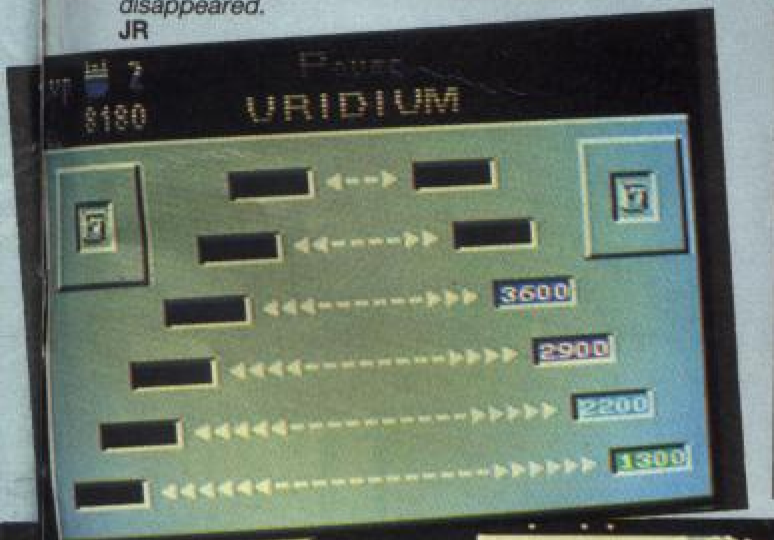
When Andrew Braybrook's much awaited horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up arrived, all work ground to a halt. The reviewing team battled *Uridium* for hours until forced back to their word processors to write their comments. 'Immaculate in both its execution and conception' was Liddon's innermost thoughts, and Penn proclaimed it the be 'one of the most addictive and spectacular shoot 'em ups yet seem on any home computer'. Rignall's simple comment, 'what an absolutely brilliant shoot 'em up' summed up his simple feelings.

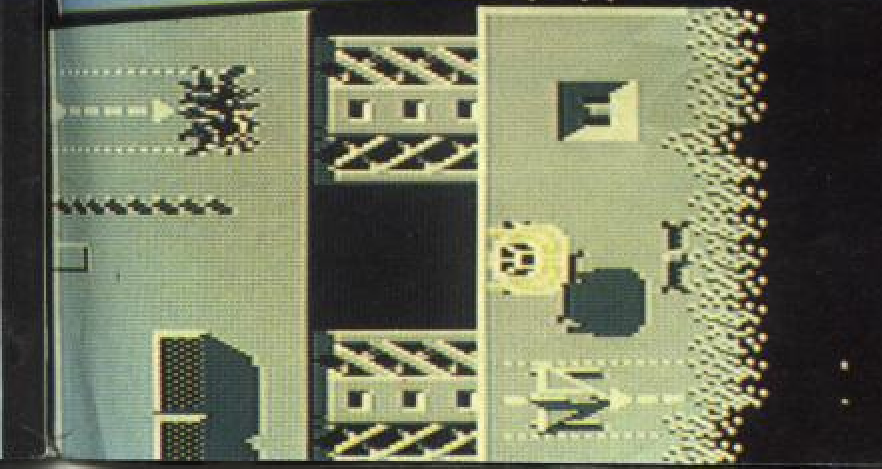
I enjoyed playing this classic shoot 'em up, but in the end I found myself just hanging around waiting to land – the shooting action all but disappeared.
JR

I was surprised by how quickly I tired of *Uridium*. The gameplay soon reduced itself to a specific routine for each ship, which was memorised and repeated time after time. Beauty is only skin deep after all.
SJ

(Jaz) Graphics and Presentation down by 3%, Sound down to 80%, Hookability and Lastability down by 5% apiece and Value and Overall down by 6% each. In retrospect, I don't think it quite deserved a sizzler.

(Steve) The Hookability, Lastability and Sound dropped to high eighties although the Graphics are still deserving of a high nineties mark. Overall to around 90% – I'd be in two minds about a sizzler rating by today's standards.





Presentation 99%
Slick in every aspect and many useful options.

Graphics 99%
Incredible high speed smooth scrolling backgrounds, superlative sprites and exceptional use of colour.

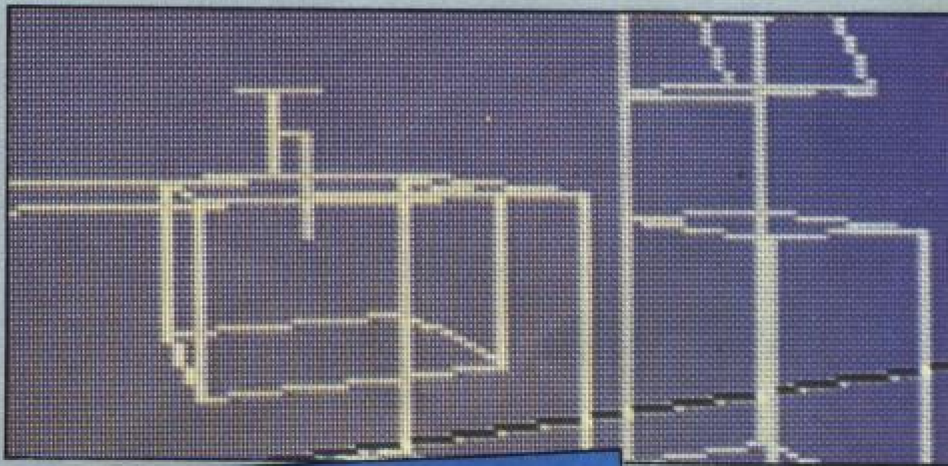
Sound 94%
Great title screen tune and highly effective FX.

Hookability 98%
Highly addictive due to breath taking graphics and simple but rewarding gameplay.

Lastability 92%
Fifteen Dreadnoughts may prove monotonous to complete due to little variation in play, but still an enjoyable game to come back to time after time.

Value For Money 92%
Slightly more expensive than previous Hewson releases but definitely just as worthy.

Overall 94%
Visually awesome, sonically sound, technically stunning and a brilliant shoot em up to boot.





Presentation 95%
No options as such but features such as Benson and the excellent atmospheric title sequence that gets you straight into the game – literally, make up amply for this apparent deficiency.

Graphics 98%
Fast, effective 3D vector graphics.

Sound 67%
Some very good sound effects, but little else.

Hookability 97%
Incredibly easy to get into since you choose the action.

Lastability 99%
Lots to explore, three ways of completing the game and the ever present urge to improve that final score.

Value For Money 97%
Just under ten pounds for an alternative way of life.

Overall 98%
A classic.

MERCENARY
Novagen

This much-heralded first-person 3D vector graphic arcade adventure lived up to all expectations when it finally arrived in the ZZAP! offices – a Gold Medal was therefore awarded. Messrs Rignall, Masterson and Penn pulled no punches when it came to airing their views. '*Mercenary* is about the best computer game ever written' spurted an enthusiastic Julian. Grinning Sean had 'absolutely no criticism to make of it' and Gary described it as 'one of the most exciting releases ever to appear.' Strong words indeed.

I enjoyed every second I devoted to this – it's absolutely brilliant. Mercenary *is undoubtedly a landmark in computer entertainment, and a program that no 64 owner should be without.*
JR

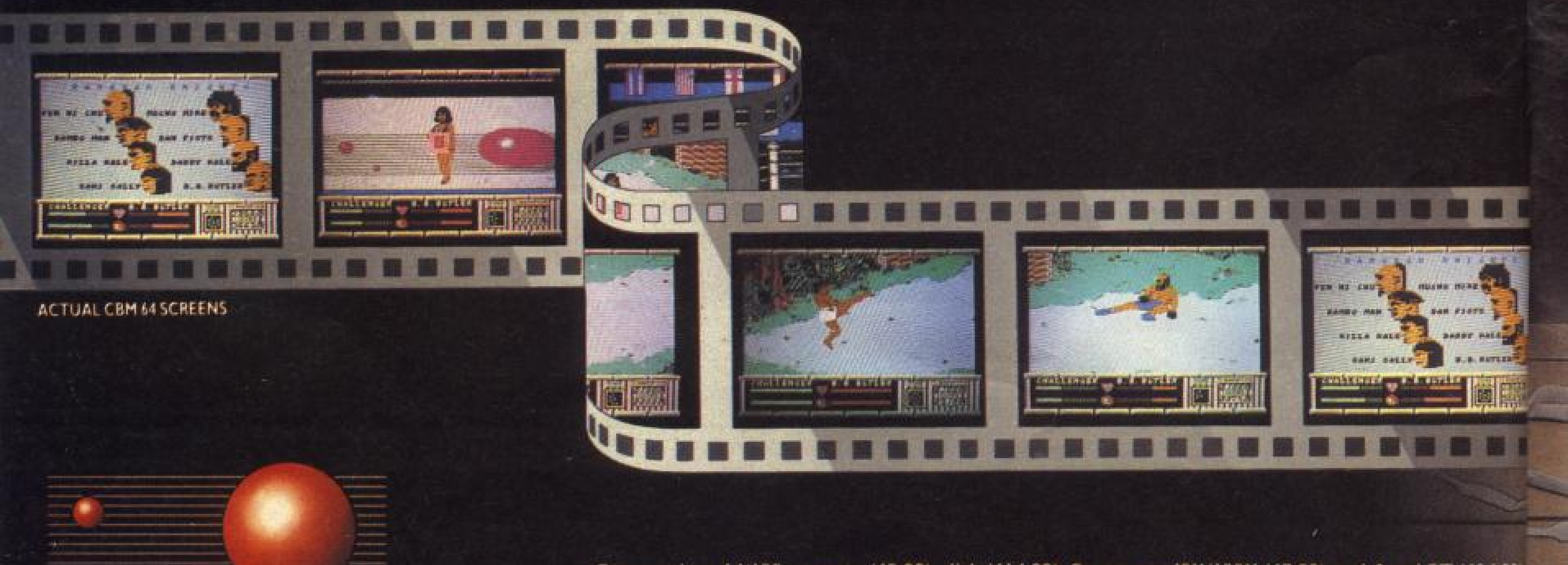
I was truly stunned by *Mercenary*, and played it continuously until I managed to escape from Targ. I can truthfully say that no game has captivated me as much, before or since. A product of pure genius.
SJ

(Jaz) It deserves every mark it got – although perhaps the Presentation should be just a little higher. It's a classic.

(Steve) I think the marks were bang on.

BANGKOK

'PROBABLY THE BEST CARTOON GAME OF THE YEAR'

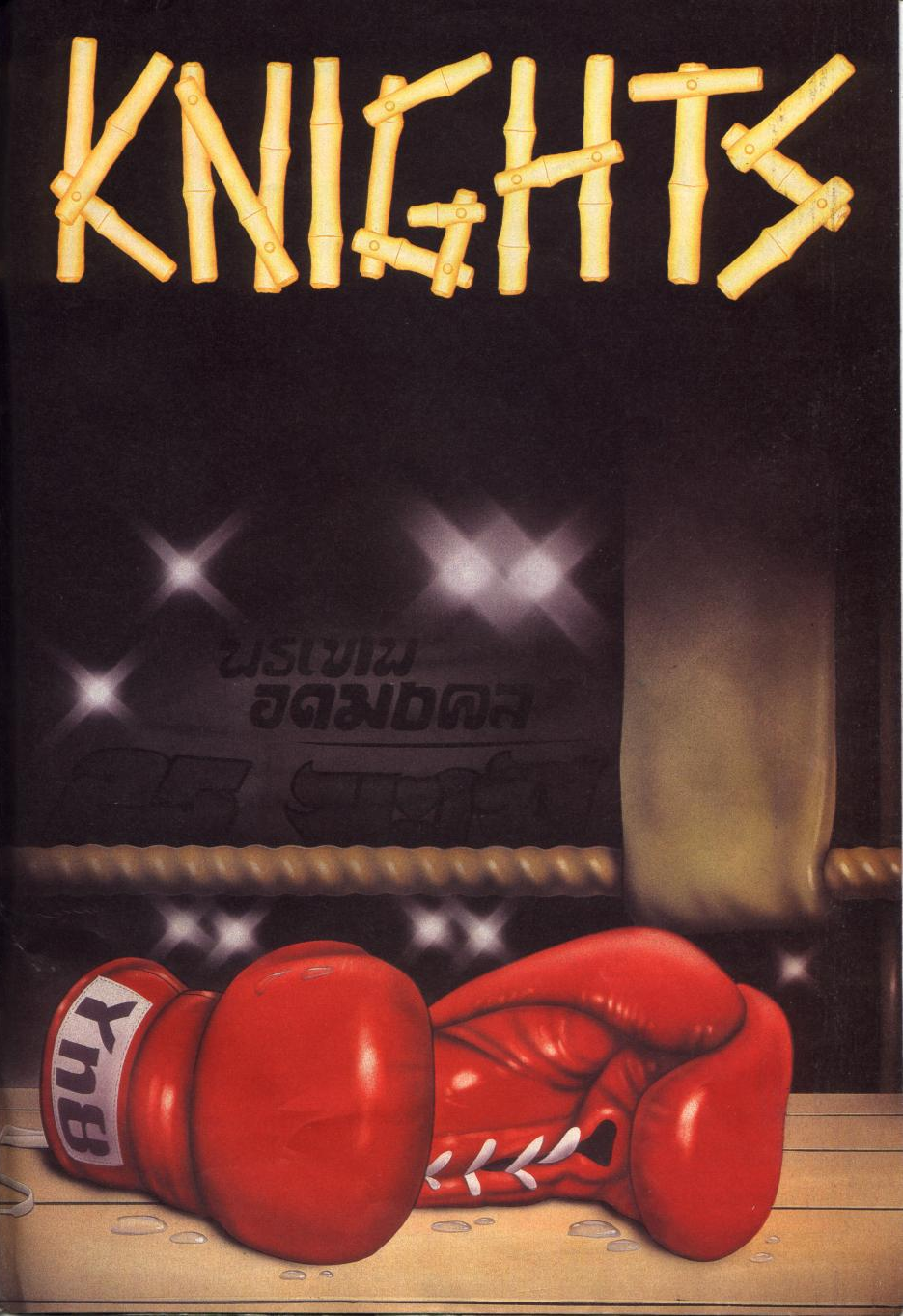


ACTUAL CBM 64 SCREENS

S Y S T E M 3

Commodore 64/128 cassette (£9.99), disk (£14.99), Spectrum 48K/128K (£7.99) and Atari ST (£24.99)

System 3, 23, Pond Street, Hampstead, London NW3 2PN. 01 438 8448
Mail Order: Activision (UK) Ltd., Units 3 & 4 Lloyds Close, Finedon Rd. Industrial Estate, Wellingborough NN8 4FR.
Distributed by Activision (UK) Ltd.


KNIGHTS

ZZAP! READERS'



GAMES TOP 30

1 *(1)* **WORLD GAMES** *(13%)* US Gold/Epyx	**11** *(21)* **INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST** Pandora	**21** *(25)* **PAPERBOY** Elite
2 *(2)* **LEADERBOARD** *(12%)* US Gold/Access	**12** *(-)* **BARBARIAN** Palace	**22** *(20)* **SUMMER GAMES II** US Gold/Epyx
3 *(3)* **GAUNTLET** *(8%)* US Gold	**13** *(10)* **ELITE** Firebird	**23** *(26)* **MERCENARY** Novagen
4 *(5)* **DELTA** *(8%)* Thalamus	**14** *(-)* **I, BALL** Firebird	**24** *(-)* **FLASH GORDON** Mastertronic
5 *(4)* **URIDIUM** *(5%)* Hewson	**15** *(22)* **PARK PATROL** Firebird	**25** *(-)* **THRUST** Firebird
6 *(12)* **THE SENTINEL** *(4%)* Firebird	**16** *(13)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** Elite	**26** *(-)* **DRUID** Firebird
7 *(7)* **SANXION** *(3%)* Thalamus	**17** *(9)* **GREEN BERET** Imagine	**27** *(27)* **180** Mastertronic
8 *(8)* **GUNSHIP** *(2%)* Microprose	**18** *(16)* **THE SACRED ARMOUR OF ANTIRIAD** Palace Software	**28** *(15)* **ARKANOID** Imagine
9 *(-)* **WIZBALL** *(2%)* Ocean	**19** *(14)* **ALIENS** Electric Dreams	**29** *(-)* **THE LAST NINJA** System 3
10 *(6)* **NEMESIS** *(2%)* Konami	**20** *(11)* **SUPER CYCLE** US Gold/Epyx	**30** *(30)* **CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING** US Gold/Epyx

S' CHARTS SEPTEMBER 1987



MUSIC TOP 10

1 *(1)* **SANXION** *(40%)*
Thalamus
Loading Music (Rob Hubbard)

2 *(6)* **DELTA** *(17%)*
Thalamus
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

3 *(3)* **GREEN BERET** *(9%)*
Imagine
Loading Music (Martin Galway)

4 *(5)* **FLASH GORDON** *(4%)*
Mastertronic
Title Tune (Rob Hubbard)

5 *(-)* **PARALLAX** *(4%)*
Ocean
Main Theme (Martin Galway)

6 *(-)* **I, BALL** *(3%)*
Firebird
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

7 *(7)* **KNUCKLEBUSTERS** *(3%)*
Melbourne House
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

8 *(6)* **THRUST** *(2%)*
Firebird
Firebird (Rob Hubbard)

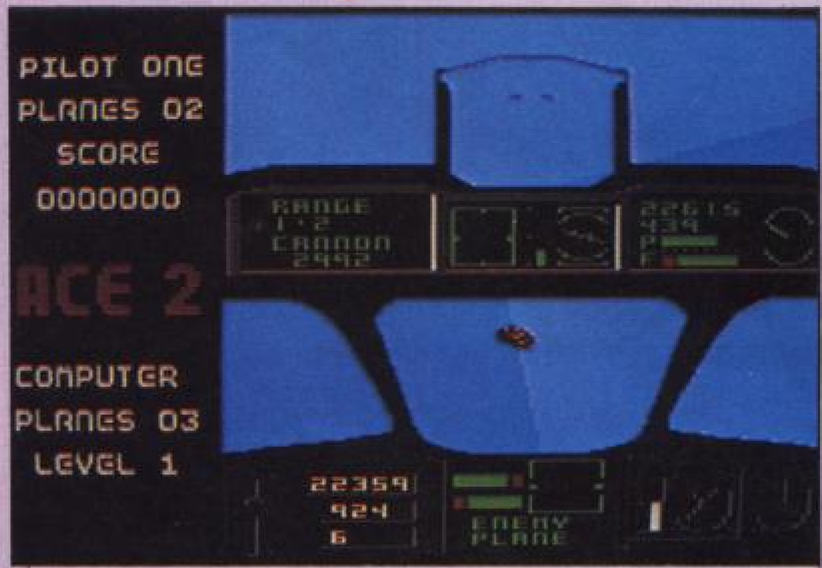
9 *(4)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** *(1%)*
Elite
Main Theme (Mark Cooksey)

10 *(9)* **ARKANOID** *(1%)*
Imagine
Title Tune (Martin Galway)


MOEBIUS
Adventure through a complex and colourful Oriental world of magic, mysticism and intrigue. Moebius – fabled deity of the island Kingdom of Khantun – has chosen you, his disciple, to reclaim the stolen Orb of Celestial Harmony from the renegade warlord.
Featuring superbly animated martial arts and sword-fighting combat, Moebius is far better than other Far Eastern adventures. Strategically and tactically more challenging, this odyssey takes you through the realms of Earth, Water, Air and Fire. The dynamic playfield changes constantly as you travel across 26 terrain types, encountering earthquakes, rockslides, heavy rains and heat waves. Graphics are top-notch and you can communicate with all the townspeople. There are 2 distinct magic systems, mixed combat modes and a fearsome array of enemies.
Strategy, planning and quick thinking are essential to reach the final confrontation in this engaging and unique fantasy.
Moebius fills both sides of two disks and is available for the CBM 64, Amiga, Atari ST and Apple.
Prices from £19.99.
The Black Belt Of Martial Arts Games
ORIGIN SYSTEMS INC.
MICROPROSE
MicroProse Software Ltd., 2 Market Place, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8DA. Tel: (0666) 54326. Tlx: 43422 MPS/UKG

COMING SOON TO A MONITOR NEAR YOU

Cascade Games Ltd

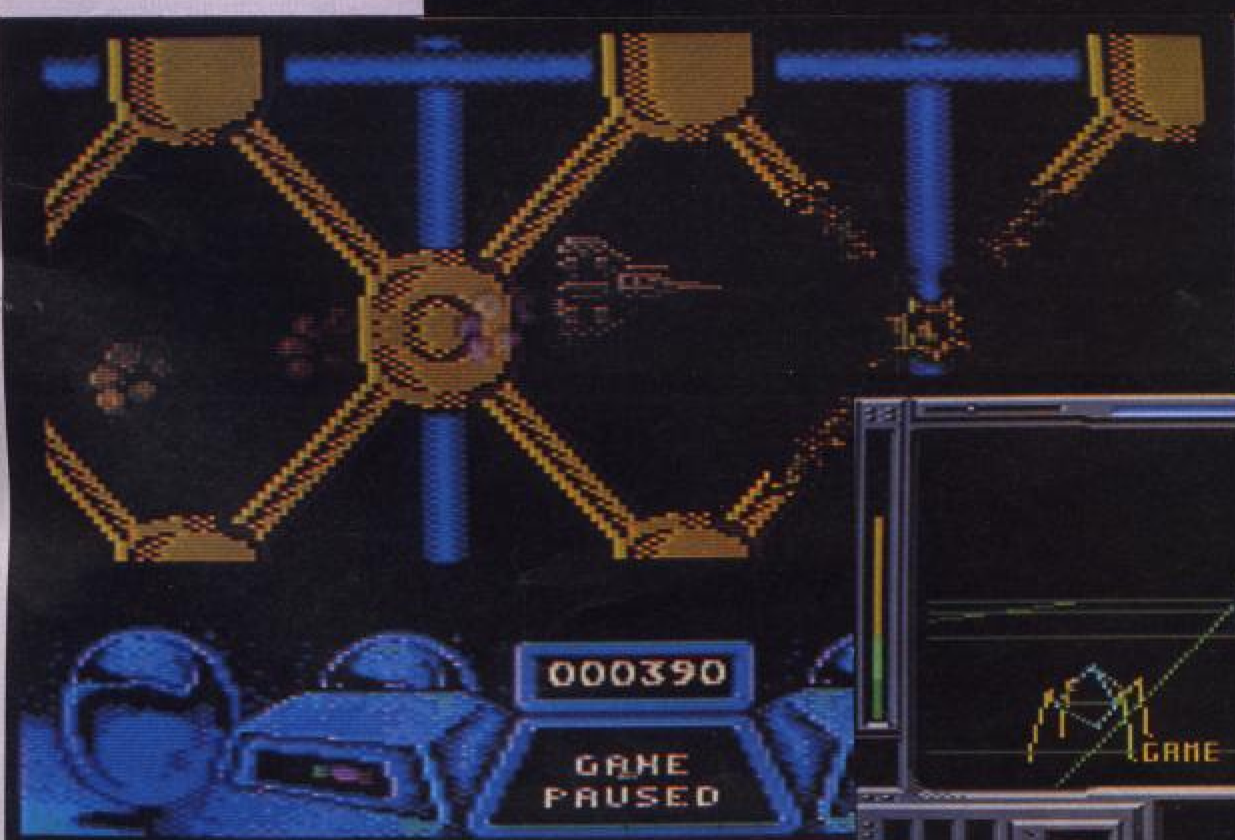


While Pilot two is airborne and waiting to enter the fray, Pilot one got up late and is still sitting on the runway

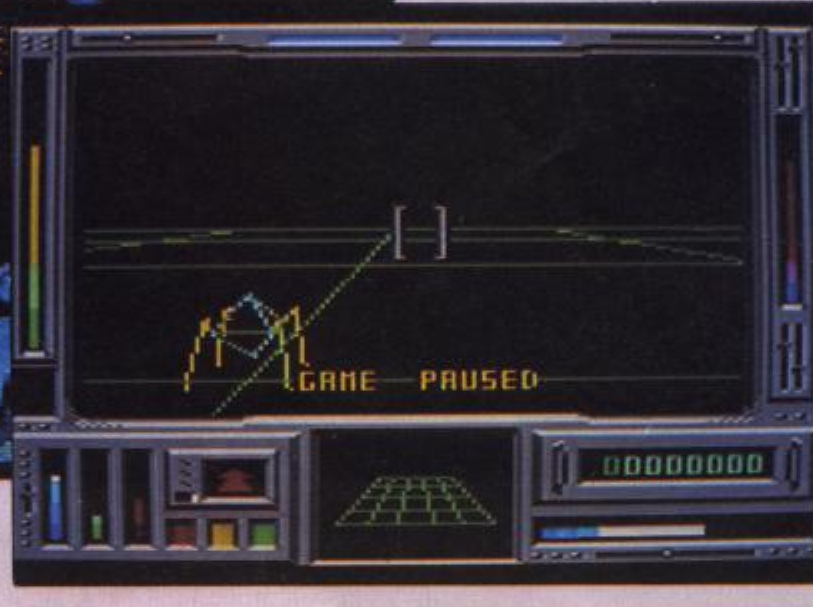
Although quiet since *Sky Runner*, Cascade recently burst into the ZZAP! offices clutching a bundle of forthcoming goodies. First on the agenda is *Ace II* (pictured top and centre right), the long-awaited sequel to their acclaimed flight combat simulator *Ace*. Programmed by Ian Martin, the man behind *Sky Runner* (with graphics by Damon), Ace II takes aerial combat a stage further and introduces a split screen display, enabling two players to interact within an aerial dogfight scenario.

***Implosion* (bottom left) is the title of the second Cascade release, programmed by newcomers Joe Booth and John Cassells. The action takes place within a high-speed scrolling alien energy network, which the player has to patrol in his speeding attack craft. Hostile swirling alien attack formations hound every move, as the player locates and blasts weak parts of the grid. The game is virtually finished and should be reviewed in our next issue.**





The final Cascade release comes in the form of a vector graphic deep space combat spectacular, programmed by Danny Gallagher of Vektor Grafix. *Ringworld* (below) features a series of huge circular Ringworlds – enormous wheel-shaped spaceships –



which the player enters and blasts before reaching Earth. These worlds becomes increasingly difficult to destroy, with a gauntlet of hostile defending spaceships and gun emplacements to be run.

Ace II **and** ***Implosion*** **should be in the shops as you read this, with** ***Ringworld*** **following for the PCW show. All three games will retail at £14.95 on disc and £9.95 on Cassette**

FIREBIRD

Bubble spitting Brontosauri? No, we haven't been drinking – just feast your eyes on the screen shot of the arcade version of *Bubble Bobble* (top right) and all will become clear.

Addicts of the game will be pleased to hear that Firebird's conversion is nearing completion and should be launched at the PCW show in September. The folks at Firebird reckon that it's one of the most faithful conversions around, containing all 100 screens of the original and playing almost identically. If you're not fortunate enough to win the arcade game in our competition on page 44, you'll have to fork out £8.95 for the cassette version or £14.95 for disk.



ariolasoft

If the school you happen to be returning to in September happens to be called Bounder Hall, you'd better watch out. Ariolasoft have just employed a super-heroine called *Mrs Mop* to keep the place clean! Armed with an arsenal of soap bars and cans of Gleamo, she undertakes a never-ending battle against dirt. The maniacal Mrs Mop not only attacks the stains and grime of the school floors, but also any pupils that get in her way, who are swiftly removed with by a well-aimed bar of carbolic soap. Cans of Gleamo are the sanitary equivalent of a Smart Bomb! Detonate one of these and instantly wipe out all the dirt in sight.

On cassette only, *Mrs Mop* will cost you a penny less than a fiver and is due in the shops around now.



PIRANHA

If you're smarter than your average bear, you'll recognise the handsome hunk featured in Piranha's forthcoming attraction, *Yogi* (below). The perennial Hanna Barbera favourite Yogi Bear has to rescue his diminutive buddy Boo Boo, who has been captured by a dastardly hunter and hidden somewhere in Jellystone park. The only trouble is that winter is closing in, and if Yogi dawdles he'll automat-

▼ Smarter than your average bear he may be, but the Ranger is still too quick for poor old Yogi



Another scene from the Bernard Goetz life story





Life is tough when you work for the Tubeway Army





ically go into hibernation.

The game, which includes loads of chase action and some lovely cartoon style graphics, should be in the shops any time now, priced £8.95. Hey-heeyyy!

ocean

Ocean's duo of arcade conversions, FMK's *Renegade* (above) and Taito's *Athena* (bottom right), are bang on schedule for their PCW release. Both are violent beat 'em ups and feature a fair amount of blood and gore.

In *Renegade* you take the part of a street-wise young man who has to negotiate some of the rougher parts of town to collect your girlfriend. Using hand-to-hand combat and armed only with your skills in the martial arts, you battle your way past mugger thugs and bikers who are all out for your blood.

The conversion of *Athena* takes a similar theme, but involves a more strategic twist, in that you must collect weapons and armour in order to continue.

Both games will be available at £8.95 on cassette, and £12.95 on disk.

ariolasoft

Get Fresh fans will be pleased to know that *Centurions*, the cartoon strip featured on the program, is just about to make the transformation from drawing board to pixel. The game, pictured in the centre, is being programmed by *Challenge of the Gobots* authors, Tony Crowther and Kevin Goodley and is set for a September release on Ariolasoft's Reaktor label.

ZZAP! 64 BACKNUMBERS

ZZAP! Backnumbers. All those ageing issues of your favourite Commodore magazine. There's something for everyone – from connoisseur to casual consumer. Here's a quick look at what you're missing . . .

No 4 August 1985

No 5 September 1985

No 8 December 1985

No 9 Christmas Special 1985/86
172 Pork-Free Pages! Amazing FREE Double Sided Oli Frey A2 Poster! Ballblazer Gold Medal! THREE Splendid Sizzlers! Koronis Rift! Robin Of The Wood! Temple Of Aphsai Trilogy! Advanced Music System! Uridium Preview! SIX Pages Of Triumphant Tips! Underwurlde Map Part I! Archer Maclean AND Jeff Minter Interviewed! US Gold Previews! Rockford's Round-Up! ALL Is Revealed – Inside ZZAP! Towers! Short Story By 2000 AD's Kelvin Gosnell! Oli Frey Profile! 2000 AD Speak! Terminal Man! And Even More!

No 10 February 1986
116 Perspicuous Pages! Bounder AND Eidolon Gold Medals! TWO Super Sizzlers! Fight Night! Revs! Deus Ex Machina! Tony Crowther AND Martin Galway Interviewed! SIX Pages of Touching Tips! Dynamite Dan Map! Underwurlde Map Part II! Incredible Pictures In The Compunet Art Gallery! Shadowspiel! Lucasfilm Interview Part I! Terminal Man! And More!

No 12 April 1986
116 Practical Paper Pages! 'Julian Rignall' On The Cover! NO Gold Medal! THREE Sizzling Sizzlers! Zoids! Biggles Preview! Game Killer! Programmer's Egos Abound – ZZAP! Superstar Challenge! FIVE Pages Of Transcendental Tips! First Four Levels Of The Eidolon Mapped! 1985 ZZAP! Readers Awards Results! Mindsmear Preview! Wild Sounds From Your 64 – Datel Digidrum AND Sound Sampler Reviewed! ZZAPBACK! Shadowspiel! More Fabulous Compunet Art! Terminal Man! And More!

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124 Profound Pages! Leader Board Gold Medal! FOUR Sublime Sizzlers! Boulderdash III! Slamball! Go For Gold! Sentinel! Budget Reviews Bonanza! Penn Wins Challenge! Euromax's Mouse And Cheese! SIX Pages Of Tender Tips! Starquake Map! More Outstanding Compunet Art! Daily Llama – Minter Diary! Gary Liddon's Technical Bit In The Middle! Shadowspiel! CRL Previews! Terminal Man! And More!

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116 Pompous Pages! NO Gold Medal! FOUR Stupendous Sizzlers! Green Beret! Tau Ceti! Infiltrator! Kik Start II! Controversial Musician's Ball Interview! Vidcom Art Package Reviewed! Penn Wins ANOTHER Challenge! Daily Llama – Minter Diary! NINE Pages Of Tasty Tips! Cauldron II Map! Hacker Map! Mercenary Map AND Tips! ZZAPBACK! Terminal Man – Final Episode! And Even More!

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124 Paginated Pages! Roger Kean Leaves ZZAP! TWO Gold Medals! Ghosts 'n' Goblins! Graphic Adventure Creator! FIVE Sensuous Sizzlers! Knight Games! Arac! The Second City! Hercules! Split Personalities! The Musician's Other Ball – Commodore's Music Expansion System Reviewed! Penn Loses Challenge! Daily Llama – Conclusion Of The Minter Dairy! SEVEN Pages Of Topical Tips! Ark Pandora Map AND Solution! RMS Titanic Map! Masterblaster III! Software Cuties Special! Uchi Mata Preview! ZZAPSTICK! Chris Butler Interviewed! ZZAPBACK! And More!

No 18 October 1986
116 Powerful Pages! Gary Penn Appointed Editor! NO Gold Medal! FIVE Sexy Sizzlers! Beyond The Forbidden Forest! Powerplay! Parallax! Iridis Alpha! Super Cycle! Two Readers Battle In The Challenge! Greg Barnett Interviewed! NINE Pages Of Titilating Tips! Tau Ceti Map AND Tips! Second City Map AND Tips! And More! More! More!

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148 Pretty Pages! World Games Gold Medal! FIVE Spiffing Sizzlers! Dan Dare! Sanxion! Tass Times In Tone Town! Trivial Pursuit! Delta Four Interview! ZZAPSTICK! TEN Pages Of Terrific Tips! Miami Vice Map! First Four Levels Of Equinox Mapped! Robin Of The Wood Map! John Twiddy Interview! ZZAPBACK! And (Believe It Or Not) MORE!

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180 Prestigeous Pages! TWO Gold Medals! The Sentinel! Boulderdash Construction Kit! FIVE Superb Sizzlers! Sacred Armour Of Antiriad! Leather Goddesses Of Phobos! Bobby Bearing! The Pawn! Trailblazer! Firebird's Fabulous Microrhythm Drum Kit Reviewed! TWELVE Pages Of Top-Hole Tips! Jack The Nipper Map! Zoids Map! Dan Dare Map! Antiriad Map! And More! More! More!

No 21 Christmas Special 1986/87
196 Promiscuous Pages! NO Gold Medal! ONE Scrumptious Sizzler! The Bard's Tale! The ZZAP! Lads! Denton Designs Revisited! Desert Island 5¼'s! Rockford's Round-Up! Tamara Knight – Part One! Newsfield Reviewer's Challenge! Masterblaster IV! ELEVEN Pages Of Thrilling Tips! Glider Rider Map! Druid Map! Hacker II Map! Infiltrator Tips AND Maps! Fabulous Pull-Out 1987 Calendar! Compunet – Partyline Parody! More Glorious Binary Pictures In The Art Gallery! Tamara Knight – Part Two! ZZAP! Scrapbook! Page 202! And More!

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132 Powerful Pages! Over FIFTY Pages of Reviews! NO Gold Medal! FIVE Stunning Sizzlers! Gauntlet! Moonmist! Escape From Singe's Castle! They Stole A Million! Tamara Knight – Part Three! SEVEN Pages Of Triumphant Tips! Flash Gordon Map! Last Four Levels Of Equinox Mapped! Mercenary: The Second City – THE Cheat! Infodroid Map! Kele-Line Profile! And Much Much More!

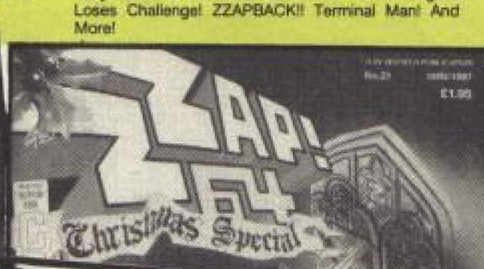
No 23 March 1987
116 Plague-Free Pages! NO Gold Medal! TWO Sweaty Sizzlers! Mutants! Brian Clough's Football Fortunes! TWO Powerful Pages Of Hard-Hitting Editorial! Portal 'Review'! Sensible Software Interviewed! TWELVE Pages Of Taxing Tips! Camelot Warriors Map! Firelord Map! Avenger Map! Fist II Map! Dante's Inferno Map! Tamara Knight – Part Four! 1986 ZZAP! Reader's Awards Results! The Andrew Braybrook Diary – Mental Procreation Part One! And (Gasp) MORE!

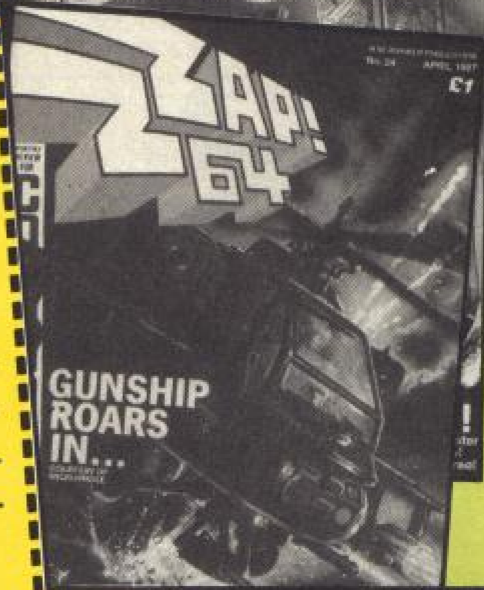
No 24 April 1987
116 Packed Pages! NO Gold Medal! ONE Steaming Sizzler! Gunship! SIX Pages of Coin-Op Reviews! ELEVEN Pages Of Tasty Tips! Tarzan Map! DIY 3D Escape From Singe's Castle Map! Nosferatu Map! Aliens Map! Future Knight Map – Part One! Tamara Knight – Part Five! Mental Procreation – Part Two! And A Whole Lot More!

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Update:
Saving young **Pas** and his sister from the clutches of an ancient robot leads **Cross** – part man, part computer, part virus – to their tribe's ceremony of the **Searing**, a mysterious bolt of energy from space – the dramatic prelude to the **Giving**. And by the lakeside . . .

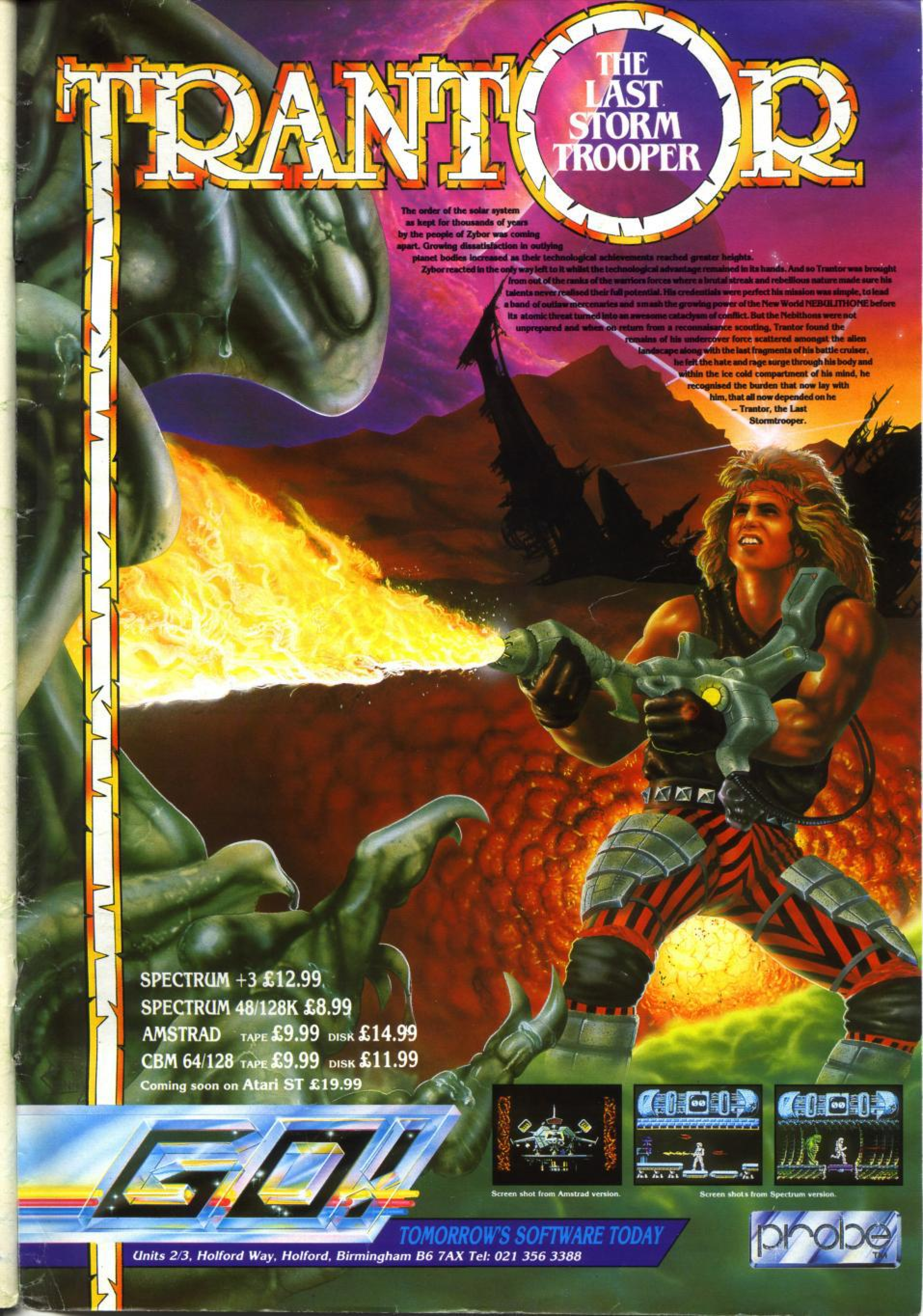
THE TERMINAL MAN



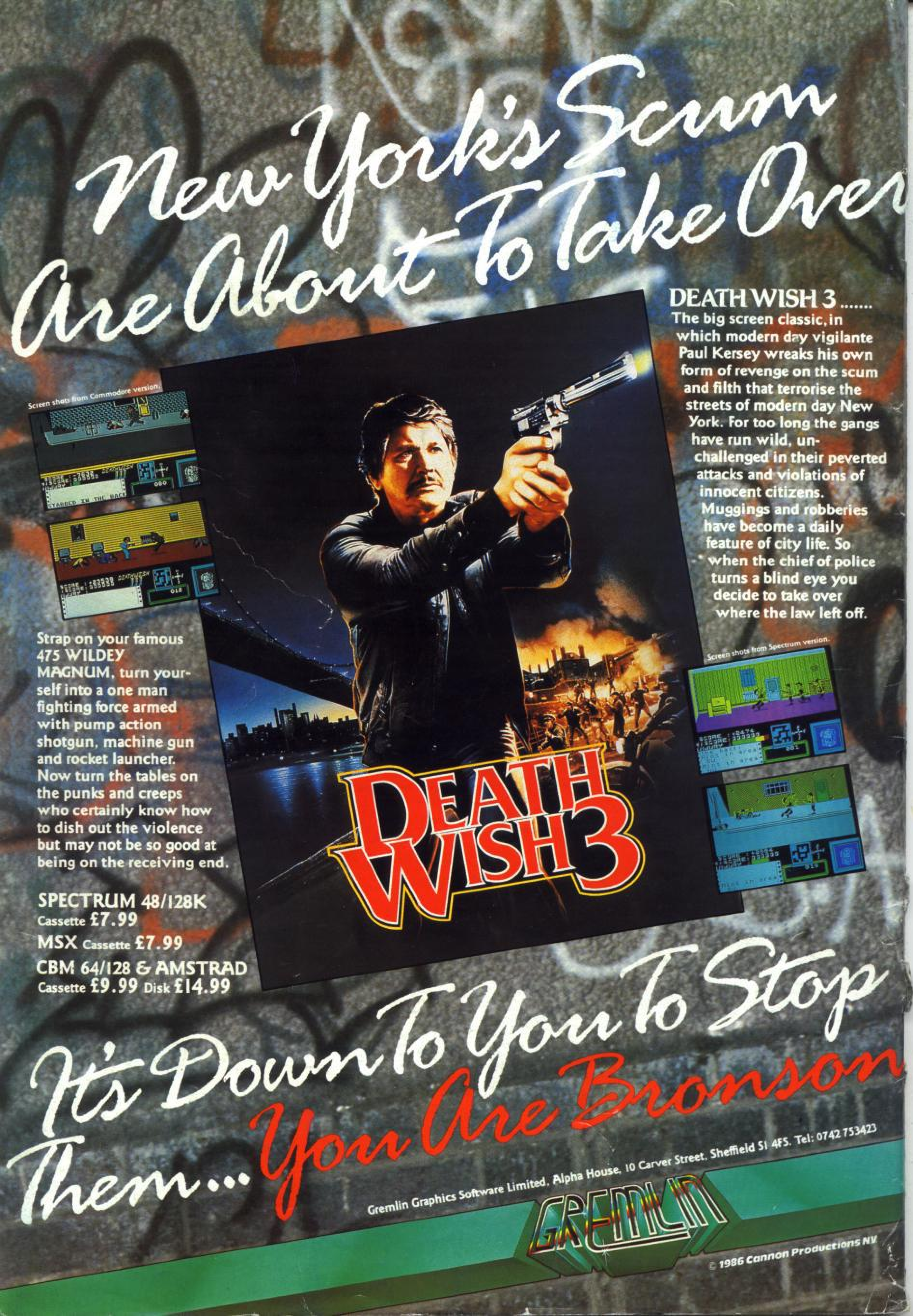


BY OLIVER FREY

Next Month: Anchor in Space



TRANTOR
THE LAST STORM TROOPER
The order of the solar system as kept for thousands of years by the people of Zybor was coming apart. Growing dissatisfaction in outlying planet bodies increased as their technological achievements reached greater heights. Zybor reacted in the only way left to it whilst the technological advantage remained in its hands. And so Trantor was brought from out of the ranks of the warriors forces where a brutal streak and rebellious nature made sure his talents never realised their full potential. His credentials were perfect his mission was simple, to lead a band of outlaw mercenaries and smash the growing power of the New World NEBULITHONE before its atomic threat turned into an awesome cataclysm of conflict. But the Nebithons were not unprepared and when on return from a reconnaisance scouting, Trantor found the remains of his undercover force scattered amongst the alien landscape along with the last fragments of his battle cruiser, he felt the hate and rage surge through his body and within the ice cold compartment of his mind, he recognised the burden that now lay with him, that all now depended on he – Trantor, the Last Stormtrooper.
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probe


New York's Scum
Are About To Take Over
DEATH WISH 3 ....
The big screen classic, in which modern day vigilante Paul Kersey wreaks his own form of revenge on the scum and filth that terrorise the streets of modern day New York. For too long the gangs have run wild, unchallenged in their peverted attacks and violations of innocent citizens. Muggings and robberies have become a daily feature of city life. So when the chief of police turns a blind eye you decide to take over where the law left off.
Screen shots from Commodore version.
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Screen shots from Spectrum version.
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Them... You Are Bronson
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